

LIKEWISE

THE MAGAZINE OF WRITING, BOOKS AND EVERYTHING

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LIKEWISE THANKS:

The man on the bike as always, without whom this magazine would never exist. VirginNet, Stephen Bonner and all at the Virgin.Chat newsgroup and webring. Steve Sant, our on-line oracle of wisdom. Clever bugger....

Finetime, for being excellent people. Bill Drummond, Mark Manning, Bill Barker, Nicky Wire and all the contributors who have sent in work. Chapter & Verse for the support, the party, the years of being there and everything. You'll be sorely missed.

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We may not necessarily hold the views and opinions of those printed in this magazine. Our policy is to be open-minded and not to edit submissions.

ALL COPYRIGHT RESTS WITH EACH INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR. BUT OUR STUFF IS OURS SO DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT. REALLY.

Likewise Magazine is part of Sui Generis Publishing. And we advertise in here because we can and because we need the damn publicity. So no excuses necessary.

EDITORIAL

Here it is, the very first issue of LIKEWISE. It's a baby as yet, just about aware of where it is. We hope, like all parents do, that you'll like it, and help it to grow up to be a famous person, or US President, or even just to have a good time.

Likewise aims to be a springboard for anyone who writes, who wants a share of that glamour of seeing their name in print. Sure it's not the same as seeing it in lights on Broadway, but it's still something undeniably special. But where are the writers names in lights? Where are the big posters? The talk-shows, the merchandise, the party, the name, the fame? Well, writing has always been a laid-back affair. Never pushed itself. Not like music, or movies, all rushing to get into you at the same time. In the sale of the century, the writers just wait, standing around until everyone else has had the best stuff and the fight is over. Then they tentatively look over and, if there's anything left worth having, they'll quietly pay the full asking price.

Perhaps if we start putting writers in the limelight? These true purveyors of vision, all these people who can use language the way Truffaut or Spielberg wield a camera, or write lines that move you like your favourite piece of music. Writers work for you too.

What we need is a new approach. At certain times in history we've almost managed to jump in there, even if it was only for a while. But now we need some of that light shone over here. These writers are already here at the party they have been for years. And they do party. They do dance, it's just that no one's asked them yet. So ladies and gentlemen, writers, people of the press, welcome to the ball. It's just through here. No invitation needed. Go right on through. Here the spotlight shines brightly on everyone.

Gavin Leigh, Editor

DEMO ISSUE:

This is, in a way, a 'demo' version of LIKEWISE MAGAZINE. With this first copy, we hope to find support to make Likewise become the magazine we think it should be. The idea is to have a magazine that a really great read, while at the same time giving all those struggling writers, artists, journalists, in fact anyone who wants to appear within the pages of a magazine, a place where they can finally get into print.

They can then add their published work to their portfolio. And maybe they can use it to carry on writing in public. We send copies to publishers to further ensure that contributors get the exposure in the right place.

By supporting this magazine, you are enabling us to do what we want to do most; promote writing, books, print and everything, and helping all those who dream of one day being a writer to get closer to their dream. We need these people.

We intend to print this first issue again, bigger and better with a lot more in it, in a format that competes with other magazines. What you have in your hands is a beta version, a calling card. If you like what you see, write and tell us. Write and tell us which contributors you like so we can pass it on.

Hopefully one day LIKEWISE MAGAZINE will be a magazine that guarantees a standard of writing that is both entertaining and of the utmost quality.

So far, we've done all this off our own backs, out of our own pockets. And we'll continue to do it. But we need more resources to fully do justice to the writing and work of the contributors. We're offering advertising space. We're looking for funding. We're looking for sponsorship. We have a lot to offer.

Be part of it.....write something.

The Likewise Staff.

CONTRIBUTOR INFO:

Rory Byrne is an artist based in Cardiff. *Wally's Wardrobe* is a bizarre graphic, notable for its weird dialogue. We've read the whole thing and we liked it. We'll print more in forthcoming issues.

David Brager hails from Los Angeles. He's a contracted gag-writer for *The Jay Leno Show* and has won several awards for his poetry. We gave the guy his own column, which he's going to try and do while he's flying around the place. If it's on the Web, this guy knows about it.

Stephen Bartley's *The Red's Care* made us laugh, as did the *Bob Red* bits. He's Cardiff's own Woody Allen, and yes, he does have ginger hair. He lives (so he says) in a cultural abyss, but with a sense of humour about it.

Lynn Stephens is studying in Cardiff and submitted *Paris By Nike*, saying that a career in writing rested on the publishing of it. We're not open to that sort of blackmail, but it's a damn fine piece.

Jackie Dent caught us by surprise. She's down in Australia and shows real professionalism and flair. Hence, two pieces; *US Pirate Radio* and the slightly disturbing *Mummies of Mexico*.

Tôphur Mills is a tall man. And a fine poet. An observant eye and an admirable wit. He's been involved in the Poetry Slams, where drunk poets stand up and rant until they're booed off. A stalwart of writing in South Wales.

Mervyn James' *The Velvet Prison* is all the more interesting when you know that James is deaf. A haunting and evocative piece of writing.

William L. Fox is a poet and critic from Los Angeles, and Bill Barker himself recommended Fox himself for this piece, a fascinating look into the art of Schwa.

Christopher Stolle is a fine poet from Richmond Indiana. He's got his own web-site where you can read more of his work. It's at <http://copper.ucs.indiana.edu/~cstolle> Go take a look. And thanks for the patience Chris.

Steve Jeanes' *Bubbles* piece is a real example of style. When we asked Steve to give us some words about himself he sent back a whole biography, and funny it was too. Steve resides in Brighton, UK.

William L. Herr's controversial piece on real vampires is a little disturbing. But his idea to interview (anonymously) interesting people was something we could miss. We did tell him to go for Star Trek fans next time though.

There are many others who submitted material we liked, but space limits what we do. However, you can see some of them up on our web site. Address in the contact info, just across the page there.

LIKEWISE - THE CONCEPT

The idea is to give space to unpublished writers, thinkers and artists which they can add to their portfolio, feel good about, and of course get seen.

Copies are sent to publishers, and there's a companion web-site. Likewise holds no copyright on the material (other than our own stuff), although if a piece goes on to be printed elsewhere, it'd be nice to give us a mention.

We don't at present pay (it's supposed to be a first step in the door), but we don't charge either. This isn't vanity publishing. Pieces are judged on merit alone. Some stuff we get sent is good, but doesn't quite suit. And, we only have a certain amount of space. See the web site for material we couldn't fit in.

And of course, our other aim is to put out a magazine that is above all else, a damn good read.

Go on.... Write something. Be part of it.

BILL BARKERS TEN FAVOURITE BOOKS

Any Book about Ancient Mesopotamia. *Various Authors*

My current serious interest, these oldest known literate civilizations show that 10,000 years ago we behaved almost exactly as we do now, and, aside from changes in the scenery, we are likely to continue to do so.

The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch. *Philip K. Dick*

Far more fantastic than his other books, this science fiction novel, written in the early 1960's, is surprisingly prescient of the tone in the final years of the 20th century. This book could make a great movie.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. *Raold Dahl*

Written by an author well known for his complex and disturbing novels for adults, his story for children is beautiful and funny while carrying a fine, mysterious message. The American movie made from the book is awful, entirely misses the point and is now a cult classic.

Meeting the Shadow. *Edited by Zweig and Abrahms*

A series of essays written about Carl Jung's theory of the Shadow archetype in personality, it seems to show that we are everything we think we are not. By the way, reading this book may change entirely change your personality.

The Random House Rhyming Dictionary. *Edited by Jess Stein*

Useful and fun to read, this dictionary, organized by words that rhyme, is a window on the history of the English language: heat, eat, heart, hearth, hear, heal... horn, torn, mourn, scorn, forlorn...

Roget's Thesaurus. *Edited by Philip D. Morehead*

Another fun read, this reference book, organize by the meaning of words, is a great starting point for creating new sentences and slogans. You don't have to read it from cover to cover, it's all right to skip around.

Schwa World Operations Manual. *The Schwa Corporation*

This is the book I recently completed, and to be honest I have to include it in this list. It's not like any book I have ever seen and there are parts that work very well while other sections I am completely unsure of. Which is exactly where I like my work to be. It will be available next September.

Bill Barker

For a European Catalogue of Schwa Merchandise call 01789-490215 (United Kingdom)

WRITING FOR LIKEWISE

LIKEWISE is intended to be a showcase for writers, and for it to succeed in publicising writing, it must appeal to a wide range of people, not just the writing community. It's content is wide-ranging, and virtually anything can be accommodated. It is difficult to specify what exactly to write, but here are some guidelines. We can give you ideas for specific articles if you need.

Articles.

These are what many people will buy the magazine for. We want off-beat, well-written pieces. The subject matter could be virtually anything. It is the style that counts. Write about stamp collecting if you can make it sound like the most beautiful thing in the world. Write about anything, but say something. We want creative writing applied to journalism. It should sell the magazine and publicise you as a writer who people want to read.

Reports.

Reports can also be included with the same guidelines as above. We don't want just statement of facts, we want feeling. Dynamism. We want the magazine to become known for being a very, very good read.

Creative Writing.

Most forms of creative writing are suitable, providing it is original, innovative, or just very very good. Short stories and pieces may be printed in their entirety, longer works would be sampled. Most pieces like this will include a brief biography and information etc, and possibly photographs/illustrations.

Humour.

While any of the above can be humorous, a short word about it here. Humour will do a lot for the magazines readability so we want lots of it. Off-beat rather than toilet. Weird rather than punchlines. LIKEWISE is intended to be a very visual magazine, so strips/cartoons would fit in well.

Illustrations.

As mentioned above, visuals count for a lot. Anything visual you want to submit, go for it.

Poetry. We get more poetry than anything else, and so pieces have to stand out. Again, anything original or different will be considered. Featured poets would get the biog/photo treatment. Please include some information with your work.

Reviews.

There will be a book review section. It will differ due to it covering original, innovative or relevant books from any date, as long as they are currently in print. This means that you can review the latest release or a book that's been around for years. If it's a book that's very well known, try to bring it under a new light. If it's trying to get a brilliant obscurity noticed, do it. Again, style will count.

Interviews. If you know anyone you could interview, we would be more than grateful for your piece. Personalities in music and film are fine, but there should be some literary interest (e.g. Ethan Hawk has just release his first book, so that's okay). If unsure, ask us first.

This covers most things. We will consider any writing at all, from major novels to screenplays, plays, news snippets, anything. If unsure, submit it anyway. Just take a look at the magazine and do better.

LIKEWISE MAGAZINE

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HELP LIKEWISE MAGAZINE TO SELL OUT!!!!!!

The quality of this first issue isn't as we aim to have it eventually. We've funded this thing ourselves, you know. But this magazine is going to get bigger and better. If you want to help fund it, sponsor it, or even just give us a laser printer, flatbed, zip drive, memory or whatever, we'll show our thanks by putting you in the magazine big style. C'mon people...HELP US TO SELL OUT

NEWSREADER

NEWS OF
VIRTUALLY NO
IMPORTANCE BUT
INTERESTING
ANYWAY.

SCHWA NEWS!! VIRTUAL BEDLAM!!

Bill Baker (see article) gave us this just in:

"PRESS RELEASE / THE SCHWA CORPORATION:

Propagate this message immediately, contents perishable. For more information, consult our multi-media Information Center at www.theschwacorporation.com.

Also note that The Schwa World Operations Manual will be available from Chronicle Books planet-wide in September, 1997. A 160 page guide to running your own planet, the manual includes new drawings, graphics, text, stickers, postcards, poster and Interdimensional Travel Card. See your bookseller or distributor for more information this summer.

COMET PLANNED!

The Schwa Corporation tests the World's first Astronomical Projector. Although barely 2 years have passed since The Schwa Corporation's first foray into galactic manipulation, the industry has been abuzz with rumours about their next interstellar event. The sparse official news releases from The Schwa Corporation during the past year have only intensified speculation. But recent sightings of a large, bright object near the constellation of Cassiopeia have brought the waiting to an end.

The Schwa Corporation announced last month that it will sponsor this planet's first Astronomical Projection Experience, with the premiere to be shown world-wide in late March, 1997. The multimedia extravaganza will provide Earth's citizens with the experience of a dead centre collision with a large, fast-moving heavenly object.

"It will be just like the real thing, except we'll have sound effects," says Dr. Curt Oxereok, who is supervising the project. "As you know, there are no sound effects in space, or at least they aren't very loud."

A short plot synopsis has been released, although company officials are tight-lipped about the cataclysmic ending, which is rumored to include a 900-foot tsunami hitting all the major Pacific Rim cities.

The entire production will be shown using the Schwa Astronomical Projector, an experimental three-dimensional effects unit capable of projecting 3-D video and audio across an entire solar system. The location of the Projector was not revealed, although it is known that part of the assembly process requires a low-gravity environment.

Previous efforts by the Schwa Corporation to physically manipulate planetary masses (most notably last year's solar eclipse) have proved successful, but the company has decided to temporarily abandon its "Mr. Gravity" product line.

"Everyone here is real proud of the work we've done with actual masses," says Diana Pinnock, Schwa's Vice President of Public Relations. "But the projects were technically, and resource-wise, just too intensive. And, they weren't any more exciting than naturally occurring phenomenon."

APE Chief Project Engineer Douglas Gray believes the projection approach to be much more practical and entertaining, in the long run.

"Let's be honest," he says. "Any idiot with a set of lunar magnets could whip the moon into a permanent figure-eight if they wanted to. But to create the illusion of a 200 mile-an-hour tsunami hitting a city, now that takes talent and expertise."

Schwa representatives say the recent sighting (which some have erroneously classified as a comet) is part of one of the Projector's calibration routines. "The 'comet' is on schedule," chuckles Oxereok. "But when the test object starts making course corrections, you're going to see a lot of red faces in the observatories. And, after we run this show, every book ever written on astronomy will at best get used as an insulating material or something."

Loaded Magazine: Anyone see that survey they did of porn magazines? Well it's a dirty job but someone's got to do it we suppose. Playboy actually didn't even get into the second round. Why? "Too many words....." was the excuse. And strangely enough, the issue or so before reviewed William Edgar Boggon's excellent *Safe Sex* novel with the comment "Too many words.....". It's obviously not a criticism you could level back at the Loaded boys.

BUY INTO CINDY CRAWFORD!

Those of you with Internet access may have heard about the new on-line game of stocks and shares *The Rogue Market*. Players can buy shares in their favourite actors, actresses, musicians etc, and watch as their preferred personality makes it or breaks it. The Washington Post called it "One of the most creative new Web sites." It was also profiled on CNN, the NY Post, the Boston Globe, the LA Daily News.

This is one of the most innovative sites on the internet—not because of ground breaking technology, but because of the way that people are interacting with the content and each other. Essentially the players constantly recreate the content, and every player affects every other player's experience.

As a result it is becoming a minute by minute survey of celebrity popularity. How many shares would you buy of Brad Pitt, Rosie O'Donnell or Bill Gates? Who has greater potential, Howard Stern, Princess Di, or Tiger Woods?

"The Rogue Market is a continuous barometer of the pop icons that dominate our lives," said William Fisher, a co-producer of the *Rogue Market* site. "Now we can all capitalize on the trends, power plays, and endless self-promotion of the nineties. On this exchange, we can trade to beat the market or to simply vote our tastes."

It's free, they give you 10,000 virtual dollars on sign up and we here at Likewise are hooked. We sank over \$5000 into the Spice Girls who are just going ballistic over in the States. But were we a little too late? We'll know when we get back to it after we finished writing this.

KNOW OF A WRITING GROUP? OR WRITING RESOURCE? WE WANT TO START A DIRECTORY OF LINKS/ADDRESSES FOR WRITERS. DROP US A LINE.

WE NEED MORE NEWS!
YOU CAN SEND US
WEIRD NEWS, FUNNY
NEWS, STUPID NEWS
ABOUT STUPID PEOPLE
AND WE'LL LOVE YOU
FOR IT. BE A LIKewise
ACE REPORTER. WE
NEED YOU!

SEX PILL: DOCTORS COME UP TRUMPS

Well, as most of the interest over cybersex has now subsided, new advances in neurology and the understanding of the human body that may result in a pill that intensifies sexual response in women. As reported in the March issue of FOCUS magazine, scientists in New Jersey, have discovered that some women with spinal cord injuries can still experience orgasms, because the signals responsible appear to be travelling along the vagus nerve pathway (which also controls reflexes such as yawning and sneezing). The scientists concerned believe that once they can unravel the different neurochemicals involved in the process, they might be able to synthesise them and produce some form of pharmaceutical treatment that would help intensify sexual response. So Woody Allen's idea of slipping into the orgasmatron and passing around the orb for a quickie may not be that far away. Of course the paranoid amongst us may wonder how long it will be before somebody decides to add the necessary chemicals to our food, turning half of the population into Meg Ryan, or will the farewell at a fast food establishment quickly change to "Come again!"



DEATH OF A SALESMAN

Many were saddened in Cardiff to see the eventual closing down of one of the city's favourite bookshops. Chapter and Verse has been an outlet for not only marginal literature, but also small press publications for a number of years. Much of the blame lays with the change in the book pricing rules in October 1995, with the larger shops discounting books. All's fair in love and war, but there are some points worth remembering. For some time, it was smaller shops such as Chapter & Verse that were the only outlets for many books. There was a personal touch and the staff were highly knowledgeable about the publications they stocked. John Tomlinson, who has owned the shop since 1991 says that "it's ironic that larger shops are thought to be more knowledgeable". The shop was at one point the only outlet for *100 Years of Socialism* locally, and it is this openness to stocking a wide range of titles that may be missed. "It was easier for a shop like us to adapt" says Tomlinson. But it was the discounting that the larger shops were given the power to apply that finally hit Chapter & Verse. As John says, "If they used their muscle to discount new writers, everyone would benefit." Instead, the chains are discounting the prices on bestsellers, books that will no doubt sell anyway.

BOB RED



Bob Red on bunjee jumping:

"As sensible as doing the lambada with a pitch fork."

By Stephen Bartley. More of Bob Red's wisdom further in....

LIKewise FORUM

When you've read some of the work written by unpublished artists and writers, drop us a line and add your comment. As of next issue, there'll be the Likewise Forum, where contributors can get feedback on their work. Send by post, or email us. Let's see some encouragement. Or maybe criticism....

THE TEN BEST LYRICAL COUPLETS FROM THE NEW MANSUN ALBUM, ATTACK OF THE GREY LANTERN

1. **STRIPPER VICAR:** "Should I grass on him, report him to the cardinal, or whether I should egg him on to turn professional."
2. **DARK MAVIS:** "His tights are nylon, his nails by Revlon"
3. **EGG SHAPED FRED:** "We're taking egg shaped fred for tea, we'll make them sit strategically, we'll test their egg-ability..."
4. **EGG SHAPED FRED:** He'll send his centipede to sort ya', he stretched it out to make it two feet taller"
5. **EGG SHAPED FRED:** "Fatima toothpaste, Penelope cheapskate, Claudia Farmgate"
6. **MANSUNS ONLY LOVE SONG:** "The centre of the universe is up for sale..."
7. **TAXLOSS:** "I'll be your taxloss lover from Liverpool"
8. **THE CHAD THAT LOVED ME:** "My desperate icon, you've got a gob on"
9. **SECRET TRACK:** "Lyrics mean nothing, don't right any wrongs"
10. **Secret Track:** "The lyrics aren't supposed to mean that much, they're just a vehicle for a lovely voice..."

PARIS BY NIKE

by Lynn Stevens

CONTRIBUTION

The pace and cuisine of our weekend in Paris is set twenty minutes into the flight, as the small plane begins its descent into Beauvais airport and the cabin crew assemble with 'snacks'. Flailing their arms about soundlessly, (my ears suffering what feels like aural-balloon-pump-torture), they try distribute duty free goods and breakfast before the hour long flight ends. Unfortunately, very little is flailed in my direction as 'all four vegetarian meals have been snapped up'. I refuse the proffered bread roll on principle and instead brandish the one Dairy Lea sandwich robust enough to survive the fraught drive to Manchester.

I search voraciously for reminders that I'm in France as the coach speeds through the banal outskirts of what could be any city. Billboards demand I recall A level French, Renaults cluster beneath us and I spot a little boy carrying a baguette home, instead of a thick white sliced. I'm lucky enough to have previous memories of Paris, having alerted my boyfriend to a surprise birthday trip here last year with a badly gift wrapped bulb of garlic, (festering in his cupboard still), and the knowledge of what lies ahead lifts me out of the grey and into the City of Light.

Deposited happily at L'Hotel De Parc D'Expositions, a three star in the South-West obsessed Tin-Tin, we then explore the local market. Over laden with sizzling take away food, we buy huge, stuffed cibatta breads and flake out on a lawn, favoured by the town's drunks. Inspired, Vicky, Dawn and I return to our own duty free, the dodgily named 'Larios' gin. We find out just how dodgy later, when, defeated by strangely empty bars in the Chatelet area, I find out how much French I actually know while drunk

and lost on the metro system, and Vicky quietly vomits in the nearest bin.

Always somewhat wary of the London underground, on the metro I felt safe and enthusiastic about conquering the city without defeating my legs. Armed with the indispensable map, ten reasonably priced tickets and a desire to see the major landmarks before dusk, we descend onto a colourful platform early Saturday morning. Later, stood between the parallel wings of the Louvre, the route stretches before us like a race track. From the huge glass pyramid that floods the foyer of the museum below us with light, to the boulevard framing Arc De Triomphe, Paris is monumental, in every sense of the word.

Buildings and landmarks dwarf us as I try desperately to superimpose vague notions of the old Paris upon the new. Place De Le Concorde should echo with the swish of the guillotine, not screeching car horns. Along the Champs Elysees, a sense of history is again defeated by car showrooms and cinemas, so we give ourselves over totally to the modern tourist vibe and visit Planet Hollywood. Proceeding downstairs as if planning to buy the entire menu, we then make the cheapest drink last the longest time and dutifully pay homage to De Niro's glass cased boxing glove.

Back to the Metro and the Eiffel Tower, stopping only for haute cuisine (l'oeufs et frites) and fine art. Vicky and I are bullied into having our caricatures drawn by a (con) artist with Uncle in Burton on Trent and a penchant for shouting 'Cheesy!' at us without warning. Later, we find Dawn quivering under the gargantuan structure of the tower, unconvinced of its sturdiness. On the second floor Vicky and I turn our backs upon the shops inside the Tardis

like tower and look out upon Paris at dusk. This unique view lets you appreciate the sheer size and scale of Paris, and endears me to the engineering feat of Eiffel.

Our big plans to stay out all night and catch the first Metro home on Sunday are scuppered when Dawn fills another platform bin with regurgitated, uncooked egg and chips. We return to bed happy though, eager to get up early and visit the famous flea market at Porte De Clignacourt. Twelve hours later, we were wishing we hadn't bothered. The guidebook promises 'hours of pleasant browsing once clear of the flyover', but the opportunist, junk filled stalls just do not yield and we are soon hightailing it back to the Louvre.

Many of the museums are free on the first Sunday of the month, but having wasted the morning we now have to sprint around the largest museum in the world to find the Mona Lisa. She smiles down from a side wall of the Italian gallery, admittedly behind glass, but given a sense of continuity by such low key treatment. Despite cajoling to pose next to my lookie-likely (attributable more to lank hair and baggy eyes than an enigmatic aura) I refuse to embarrass myself in front of so many Japanese lenses and instead we hop back over the river to the Musee D'Orsay.

This glass fronted, converted railway station is modern and welcoming and the Van Gogh collection hits me like a vividly painted brick wall. Colours swirl as Dawn and I run from one painting to another whispering through gritted teeth 'How famous is THAT!'. I felt embarrassed that limited time and knowledge meant reducing such passionate works to their relative fame, but the excitement of being just an eager nose away from Van Gogh's brushstrokes was unquenchable. Later though, in front of the equally familiar Renoir's and Monet's, excitement turned to confusion as I squinted closely at the masterpieces, trying to convince myself that I wasn't in Athena.

This confusion continued as we later trekked along the left Bank toward the Champs Elysees, and I berated myself for not truly appreciating Paris. I had loved every packed minute yet supposed myself inferior for having gorged on tourist traps and fast food instead of savouring more intimate streets and French cafe' life. I had raced through the heart and history of the city and

a bench beneath the Arc De Triomphe.

After criss-crossing the boulevard in an unsuccessful attempt to find a cheap cafe, Dawn and I hurried toward Vicky, spotting her in conversation with a whiskery old man. Soon, we too were seated enthralled as this 93 year old Parisian charmed us with his vitality and wisdom. As darkness gathered around us, Constantine's face still glowed with animation as he showed us the photo of himself in Berlin in 1938, the thankyou card from President Chirac for some long ago favour and an identity card from his days as a philosophy professor in Los Angeles. He had a story to match every British town we mentioned and also spoke of his trip to Berlin later that week, 'to see how she rises from her recent depression'. Not only had he done so much with his long life, he was still doing it.

In awe, I asked Constantine which city he liked best and he smiled as he said Paris. I felt strangely exonerated as this old hand fondly summed up the beauty of the city as 'good architecture' and told us to eat at 'McDonalds, it's cheap and filling'. I was 21, and felt like a failure for not discovering the Paris of yesterday, while he was 93 and embracing the Paris of today. His wrinkles reminded me that there would countless future visits here, and what I thought was a frustrating sprint was in fact the start of a marathon. Happy then, on my last night in France I determined the charm of Paris in the retreating figure of Constantine, silhouetted by a glowing Arc De Triomphe, an enduring, handsome old man...in a baseball cap and trainers.

Lynn Stevens



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FEATURED
MAGAZINE

PLAYBOY



Jemma Johnson

For most of its life (from a UK perspective that is), Playboy Magazine has enjoyed a rather vague position among magazines. Its physical position has always been top shelf, sat between *Fiesta* and *Club International*, about four issues away from *Viz*, but it's a very different matter when you get between its covers.

When Hugh Hefner squatted on his

floor, pasting together a new men's magazine, he could never have envisaged the Playboy culture he was giving birth to. Now, the Playboy name is up there with Coca Cola, Batman and Marlborough, household names, familiar symbols and so much part of culture today. But it's still failed to shake off the adult magazine tag for most people, regarded as a sexist, tawdry and lowest common denominator publication.

November 1953 saw the first issue hit the shelves. Hefner had bought a previously unpublished nude photo of Marilyn Monroe, and this became something of a centrepiece for the issue (it's been said that Hefner almost started with this picture and pulled the rest of the issue together around it). But

there was so much more to it. There was a weird 'go to hell' attitude, an outspokenness that looked at convention and then still wrote what it wanted to. Within two years it was outselling *Esquire*, and had evolved into a magazine that was unique and individual. And it had also developed a voice that was distinct and astute. Many writers were attracted to it, due to the freedom it promised in content. There were to be two Playboy specialities: the Playboy interview,

and new fiction.

The Playboy interview has long since been known to be some of the best in the world. Ultralong, indepth and never scared to ask any question, the variety of people who have been subject to these interviews is remarkable. The very first Playboy interview was with Miles Davies. Davies had always been seen as short tempered and decidedly unwilling to talk. However, Playboy accompanied him as he went about his usual daily routine, playing with his kids, working out, learning the guitar. It's an incredible interview, with Miles coming over not the elusive musical genius, but the genuine, passionate man that he was. This laid the template for all the following interviews over the next forty years. And the list of interviewees reads like a who's who in history. Greats such as Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, were both featured, given free reign to talk about the causes they felt passionate about. Try out Groucho Marx, Peter Sellers, Jimmy Hoffa, Henry Miller, Salvador Dali, Jean Genet, JeanPaul Sartre, Timothy Leary, Marshall McLuhan, Ginsberg, Mae West, Gore Vidal; the list goes on. In fact, it amounts to over 380 interviews.

The actual writing content of the magazine has been just as impressive. The fiction covers such ground over the years as *Fahrenheit 451*, *All The Presidents Men*, 2010 and Ian Fleming's Bond novels featured regularly. For journalistic content, you'll regularly find bigname writers adding their touch. Jack Kerouac wrote an article *The Origins of the Beat Generation*. A profile of Lenny Bruce led to Playboy commissioning his autobiography *How to Talk Dirty and Influence People*, publishing it in book form under Playboy Press.

Playboy Magazine has long been at the front of confrontational journalism, offering space for opinion based on reason, tolerance and fairness. The Playboy Forum has stood out regularly, exposing stupidity and prejudice.

And for all out proof that Playboy

Magazine is more than just a centrefold, check out the Braille edition, which appeared for the first time in January 1970.

Playboy needs a reappraisal. It needs some new light thrown on it. It now has a high percentage of female readers. It's sometimes a magazine you have to be selective about; I don't really have any interest in "who a Playboy Reader is", but that was always part of the whole thing anyway. It has never strived for political correctness, but often ends up more correct. Likewise Magazine suggests that you treat yourself to a copy this month. You may be surprised. You may even like it. And it'll have some damn fine writing in it too. And there are always those pictures....

PLAYBOY FACTS:

Circulation: 4.5 million worldwide (3 million in the United States)

Hugh Hefner Arrested? Yep.

He was arrested in June 1963 on obscenity charges by Chicago police after Playboy published a pictorial called, "The Nudist Jayne Mansfield." The trial resulted in a hung jury that voted 7-5 for acquittal

Hugh Hefner has a species of rabbit named after him. In a kind of tribute to Hugh Hefner, an endangered rabbit was given the name *Sylvilagus palustris hefneri*

Men on the cover: The first man to appear on the cover was Peter Sellers, in April 1964. The second was Burt Reynolds, in October 1979. The other men who have been on Playboy's cover are Steve Martin, Jerry Seinfeld, Donald Trump, Dan Aykroyd and Leslie Nielsen.

INTERNATIONAL? You could say that; there's 16 international editions.

What is the origin of the famous Playboy Rabbit Head?

The Playboy Rabbit was originally going to be a stag (the name Hefner originally wanted to call the magazine). Art Paul designed it, and it's been on every cover since the second issue.

Why a rabbit? Hef once explained, "I selected a rabbit as the symbol for the magazine because of the humorous sexual connotation, and because he offered an image that was frisky and playful. I put him in a tuxedo to add the idea of sophistication. There was another editorial consideration, too. Since both 'The New Yorker' and 'Esquire' use men as their symbols, I felt the

rabbit would be distinctive; and the notion of a rabbit dressed up in formal evening attire struck me as charming, amusing and right." Added Art Paul, "If I had any idea how important that little Rabbit was going to be, I probably would have redrawn him a dozen times to make certain I was doing him justice, and I suppose none of those versions would have turned out as well as the original. As it was, I did one drawing and that was it. I probably spent all of half an hour on it." The Rabbit was so well known that in 1959 a New York reader was able to send Playboy a letter with the Rabbit Head as the only address.

Is Playboy pornography?

Playboy CEO Christie Hefner gives this response: "For those people who enjoy reading Playboy, there's no dichotomy in the fact the magazine has an erotic component and an intellectual, humorous and celebrity component; that is the

world they would like to live in. For people who find sex dangerous, troubling or offputting, anything with sex in it carries negative connotations."



QUOTES FROM THE PLAYBOY INTERVIEWS:

"I have a feeling of fellowship with Oswald. No that I was hostile to President Kennedy. I simply wasn't interested in him. But I'm with the lone individual who opposes an society that damns evil."

Jean Genet - April 1964

"Obscenity has its natural place in literature, as it does in life, and it will never be obliterated. I feel I have restored sex to its rightful role, rescued the life force from literary oblivion."

Henry Miller - September 1964

"A man must drink until he locates the truth. Drinking is a serious moral and spiritual activity. We consume ourselves in order to search for a truth. Drink is the active mans drug addiction."

Norman Mailer - January 1968

"In the Sixties, from 'Night Of The Iguana' on, everything went to pieces for me. I told Gore Vidal I thought I had slept through the Sixties. And he said 'Don't worry, you didn't miss anything'"

Tennessee Williams - April 1973

"I never infringe on people. I was just like Clint Eastwood; I only beat up dudes who deserved it."

O.J. Simpson - December 1976

"Now my pornographic books are in the suburbs. They're everywhere, and women come up with babies in strollers and say "We love your dirty books". They put it right there in the stroller with the kid. I think that's great."

Anne Rice - March 1993

"Are there any writers on the literary scene I consider truly great? Yes -- Truman Capote. But there are others who, while not quite in this exalted orbit, are still commendable."

Truman Capote - March 1968

"Look, I only had two choices; hangin' or shootin' was all they had to offer, and I'd prefer to be shot."

PLAYBOY: Why?

"Fuckers may not hang me right."

Gary Gilmore - April 1977

"There is an enemy out there. This country--indeed, the whole world--consists of two opposing forces: us, and those who would force their own values and attitudes upon us."

Hugh Hefner - January 1974

US PIRATE RADIO

By Jackie Dent

Stephen Dunifer, with his philosophical looking long flowing beard, speaks of radio in relation to concepts such as human rights and freedom of speech. He is a self professed anarchist, political activist and electronics whizz who has a knack for making and teaching people how to make their own radio transmitters. He is also the crux of the rebel radio movement in the United States.

Not only has his station Free Radio Berkeley led to the avatar of about 300 illegal, unlicensed micro powered stations across the US, but for the past three years Mr Dunifer has also been sending low watt transmitters to pro-democracy broadcasters in Mexico City, Zapatista guerrillas in the Mexican state of Chipas, Indians in British Colombia and villagers in El Salvador and Guatemala.

He also helped establish Radio Timon in Haiti at the invitation of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and also supplied transmitters to grassroots organisations resisting the coup against Aristide in 1995.

The New York Times has described him as the 'guiding light to the small but growing guerrilla movement of underground radio'. He has indeed become a kind of spokesperson as he limps with a bad leg through his cluttered electrical workshop in Berkeley to show me the over the counter parts that go into building a low watt radio transmitter for about A\$3000.

"The current structure essentially precludes all but the wealthy from having a voice in this country - we're talking about a process which requires most likely hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not more, to

put a station on the air from the start." "We felt that basically the airwaves belong to the people in this country and the Federal Communications Commission has aided and abetted their theft by the corporate media interests. I and others felt we had to make a stand and do something very proactive and that was putting Free Radio Berkeley on the air in April 11, 1993."

monitored transmissions on the frequency of 88.1 megahertz that emanated from a radio station identifying itself as 'Free Radio Berkeley'

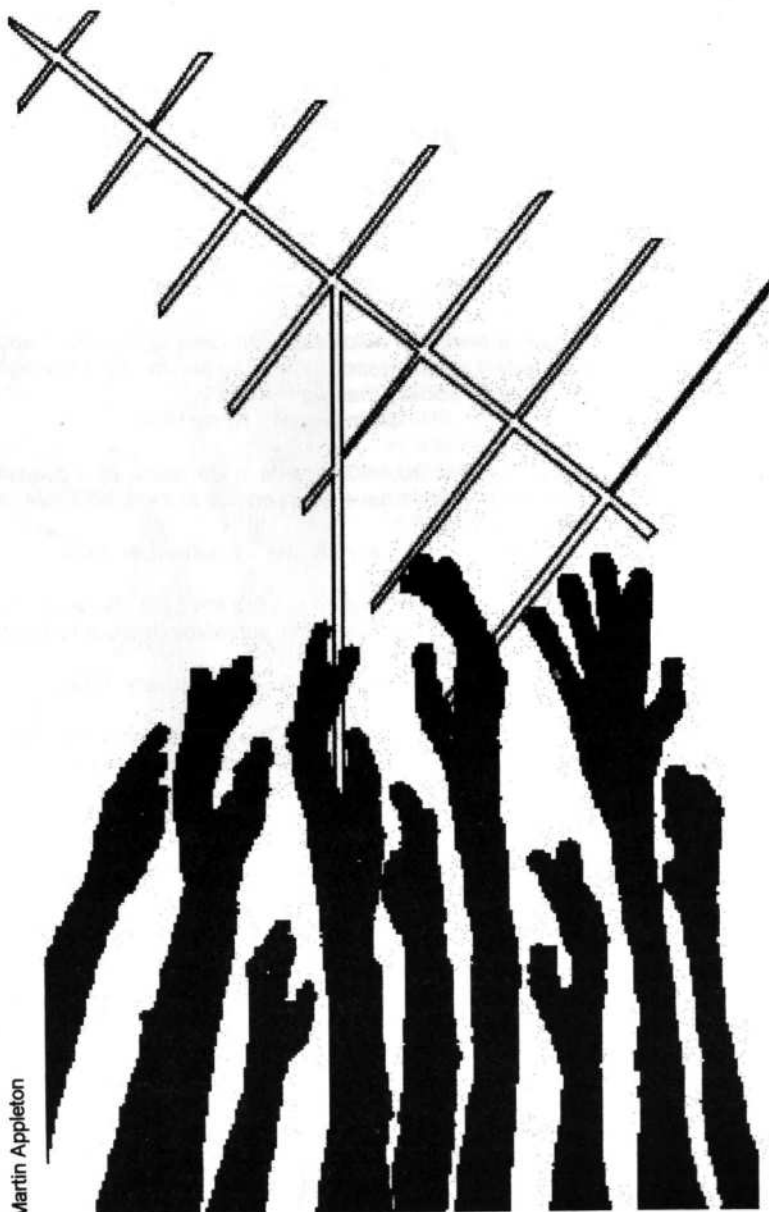
"...on May 2, 1993, one of the agents approached the residence from which the transmissions were originating and attempted to inspect the radio station that was in operation. A man who Commission

investigators stopped as he left the residence, and who the investigators later identified as Stephen Paul Dunifer, refused to allow inspection and claimed ignorance of any radio station."

So within a month of its conception Mr Dunifer was fined \$20,000 by the FCC for broadcasting without a license. A preliminary injunction was also sought to try and shut down the station with the FCC's lawyer David Silberman telling a court hearing on January 20, 1995 that Free Radio Berkeley must be closed down because: "Unlicensed broadcasting creates chaos on the airwaves. It's anarchy on the airwaves."

Ten days later, in what was a first for pirate stations in the US, Federal Judge Claudia Wilken refused the injunction on constitutional grounds as Dunifer had claimed the policies of the FCC banning micropowered stations went against the grand ol' American First Amendment which protects Free Speech.

Three years later while legal proceeding continue (the FCC is seeking a permanent injunction against Dunifer) Free Radio Berkeley has gone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and the schedule has continued with a volunteer collective



Martin Appleton

And it did go to air. But such overt activism did not go unnoticed or unheard and the station was busted within a month of it starting up. The court documents tendered by the FCC give the bust a strange air of suburban insurgency activity.

"On April 25, 1993 an agent from the CIB's San Francisco field office

staff of a bout 100 people. "you have to remember that all kind of community people, organisations, and individuals who have never had a chance to be on the radio now have a voice."

Most of the shows on Free Radio Berkeley have an anarchist, do-it-yourself attitude which are trying to promote some kind of change in the community. "I see this station as a human rights and civil liberties issue," says Dunifer.

So while Dunifer argues ideology, the FCC claimed the station caused 'chaos and confusion' by interfering with the signal of other broadcasters. Dunifer says it is impossible for low wattage broadcasters to interfere with other stations as much of the radio spectrum is vacant and it has been possible for the station to just 'drop in'. And anyway they have never had any complaints about interference or content.

It almost seems timely that with the explosion of free radio stations across the US, corporate ownership of radio has been condensed. In 1996 the Telecommunications Bill was passed in the United States which amongst other things, included a deregulation of ownership of radio stations.

"The deregulation has created a Texas land rush sale of radio stations at incredibly inflated prices and this has resulted in the consolidation of broadcast media resources into much fewer hands," says Dunifer.

The biggest players in the radio scene in the US these days are big corporations like Disney, Westinghouse and General Electric. As an example of the sums of money passing hands, a deal between Westinghouse and Infinity was worth around \$4 billion dollars for a group of radio stations and other FM radio stations, after the deregulation are now selling for about \$100 million or more.

Another facet of the Telecommunications Bill was the Computer Decency Act. The US Government was attempting to restrict content on the Internet (inspired by red herrings such as pornography), but a three judge panel struck this down in early 1996 on the grounds of Free Speech. President Bill Clinton is still vowing to appeal this decision.

Dunifer is concerned by government efforts to control speech. "We have

this concept in the US called Hate Speech where in public venues, like college campuses, they are attempting to restrict what people say. To restrict somebody's efforts to say something, no matter how stupid or odious or malevolent it may be, to me, is a slippery slope that we shouldn't go down."

"Basically Bill and Hillary Clinton want to create a therapeutic Miss Manners Police state where there will be mandated niceness to everyone and mandated dosages of Prozac."

He is horrified by the apathy that exists within the 'United States of Denial' and says most Americans are not aware. "They don't read, they watch TV and they don't have any real conceptual framework to understand what is happening around them."

It's a Thursday afternoon in tree lined suburban Oakland, San Francisco and Billy Jam taps his foot to the rhythm of a tune off Chuck D's latest album. He's pre recording his weekly rap show in his self constructed studio for Free Radio Berkeley.

"God mother fucking damn God Damn God Damn it's hip hop slam pirate fucking radio broadcasting coast to coast. On today's show we've got a lot of good stuff for you. We'll be talking about the National Day of Police Protests where everyone is requested to dress in black. We're going to go deep into the rap line and check out some of the freestyles coming in from all over the country and also we got a whole set of female rap artists....."

Billy Jam has been in the Oakland rap scene for 10 years now and is somewhat of a local and national commentator. (His pager has been going berserk from editors wanting copy on the aftermath of the assassination of rap hero Tupac Shakur). He is also concerned about censorship laws.

His extensive music collection has evolved into an archive of all the underground rap being produced in Oakland - which includes a shitload of \$5 cassettes sold out of the boots of cars. He's a fortyish Irishman who got into pirate radio because he was sick of editing the word 'fuck' out of rap songs that he wanted to play on commercial radio.

"We play the stuff that radio stations just won't play and because it's pirate radio we're not governed by the stupid laws of censorship where they won't let you play curses. I got kicked off the regular radio for playing curses, then I

got kicked off television for playing curses and videos that had guns, booty or drugs in them.

"The irony is that you can watch these shows like 'Top Cops' and 'Adventures of the Highway Patrol' and they show guns all the time, but when it's a black man who is a rapper with a gun suddenly it is taboo."

With Billy Jam pissed off at the censorship laws, and Dunifer determined to gain rights to broadcast, the activist intentions of this small rebel radio station are a big swerve away from commercial broadcasting and the status quo.

"With Free Radio Berkeley all we really want is the right to express our First Amendment rights and be able to carve out a space which will allow every community in this country to have a voice," concludes Dunifer as he proceeds to talk about his plans for constructing rebel radio transmitters.... JD

BOB RED



BOB RED ON HIS FATHER'S TRADE:

"My father was a stand-up cloth maker. He did all his own material."

While living in a small apartment in Iowa City with my then-fiancée I developed the odd notion of writing a book a book containing nothing but anonymous interviews with the most interesting individuals I could find. What resulted from this project, in part, was the following interview.

uncontrollable laughter, disjointed conversation. Their manner is the same as any number of individuals I have interviewed in the past, a sense of readiness to answer questions. Throughout the interview they never lose their aura of candour. Nor, in the interview, do they hesitate to give me an answer.

February's skin is almost white, like her hair. She wears bright red lipstick, and her eyes are dark blue. Like Jeremy she is relaxed and at ease, but there is no tension to her. She says she is 40% albino. She has no tattoos.

"When I was seven," she says, "my sister gave me one of

EXCLUSIVE: Vampires in Iowa STOP Interview STOP this is REAL STOP

I located Jeremy and February (not their real names) through the local paper, in the personal section of which I ran a small ad. The ad read:

Vampires Wanted:
*Writer seeks to interview vampires for ongoing project. Anonymity guaranteed. Phone ***-******

The ad ran for 1 week.

Over the next three months I received over 1000 calls from interested individuals. The majority of these did not pass my screening interview. One was a nudist vampire and would only be interviewed in the nude. I refused his offer of a massage. One was a vegetarian vampire who claimed to suck the sap out of plants. The list continues ad infinitum.

Out of all of these responses, only one directly caught my attention: Jeremy and February. The text of the interview has been edited for coherency, but the context has been retained. These are their actual words, and these are interesting people.

JEREMY AND FEBRUARY Iowa, October 1993

She asks to be called February. He asks to be called Jeremy. They look like an average American couple, and in some ways they are. Their pupils are large, but they exhibit none of the classic signs of drug use—disorientation,

For the interview we have come to a small coffee shop, and I buy them breakfast. Jeremy wants only coffee, but February takes my advice and orders the sweet roll.

Jeremy is stocky, but in a relaxed way. His manner is deceptively casual, but there is a tension to him, the sense of a bow string waiting to be pulled. A tattoo of a scull with a red barrette, with a dagger crossing it diagonally, betrays

By William L. Herr

those Spanish red peppers to eat and said it was a carrot." She smiles for a rare moment. "I ate it quickly, like a rabbit. When I felt the pain, she gave me an entire bottle of Coke to drink, and I drained it, but that only made it worse. I don't think I'll ever forget that pain."

Her face returns to a pale, indifferent cast. "Jeremy and I like to be around a lot of people. It

makes us think we look like we belong, that we're a part of their group. But even then, there's only us. It's like we're the only ones in the room, the only ones who are...the way we are."

Jeremy speaks.

He has been monosyllabic up to this point, almost shy. "We like all kinds of music, and she loves to read."

"'Hopeful Flowers' is the best book in all the world. It's about these two caterpillars, Stripe and Yellow. Stripe goes off to work, and Yellow becomes a butterfly."

"She's my Yellow."

"He's Stripe."

The waitress delivers our orders at this point, and there is a hesitant silence as she leaves. For all their willingness to speak with me, they do not want word of their activities to go beyond our booth. Soon, however, Jeremy clears his throat and smiles.

"You know," He laughs, "the other night we found this weird green box.

Something was knocking inside it, and it sounded for all the world like someone was in there, knocking to get out. We were laughing, saying that some student was doing a study, seeing how



Jemma Johnson

that he was once an infantryman. He has other tattoos as well—Felix the cat on the right and a barbell with the word "flex" on the left of a substantial chest; a Chinese dragon winds around the stem of a rose on his right arm. His eyes are brown.

many people would stop and look at this box he was knocking on."

"Sometimes I wish that all the stereotypes of vampires were true how we all have nine inch fangs and wear black capes and are cold, and all. Then it would be easy to find other people like us."

"They say all you need are hamburgers," February says, picking up the thread of the conversation, "French fries, and a college education. There's no such thing as ghosts, and vampires don't exist. I really believe that there is an opposite reaction to every action society takes. There are parallels to society. If no one believes in vampires, then of course they have to exist. There are monsters under the bed, only because you don't believe in them."

Jeremy looks at February, as if giving her a silent warning. She raises her eyebrows at him, shrugs, sighs and continues. "I can understand why people are afraid. But you have to be afraid," She says, "not only afraid of other people, but afraid of yourself, too. You have to wonder all the time if you're sane. That's even more true for us. It's not like you can walk up to someone and say, 'Hi, I'm a vampire. Can I drink your blood?'"

She lifts her mug and takes a sip of coffee. Her hand is slight, as pale as the rest of her, and she looks anaemic. The hand shakes slightly, and I wonder if she has blood sugar problems. "I have to take iron pills," she says, "or feed. My body needs the blood a lot of times. That's why I get so pale—not enough blood. After I feed, my skin turns red again. Sometimes my hair does too. But that's probably because there's blood in it."

She puts her arm around Jeremy and grins at him. "Tell him about being in the field."

"The squirrel?"

"Yeah."

Jeremy leans forward slightly, and begins speaking in a conversational tone. "Well, one time my platoon was out on a field exercise, and we ran out of MRE's. There wasn't anything to eat, so I went out and hunted down a squirrel. I caught it, alive, and ate it. That really freaked my platoon out."

He stops for a moment and drinks his coffee, then seems to search for the thread of the conversation. "Let me back up for a minute, here. When I was about four, my mom took me from my dad, in Phoenix, and moved to Indiana. She remarried, and my new dad adopted me."

"I guess I was a problem child. I always had this instinct to kill,

to hunt. I liked the sight of blood, and I always wanted it. I liked the taste of blood I got in my mouth when I was injured. Then, when I was 14, I killed a man." He looks away for only a moment, then continues. "I don't remember why it happened. All I remember was that I took a knife and sliced him across the stomach. He tried to hold his guts inside. Then I went home, and I was covered with blood."

"Well, after that I just lost it completely. I tried to kill myself a bunch of times. The first time I hung myself, and I swung on the end of a rope for three hours before my mother found me and had my father cut me down. Another time I jumped from a bridge into the middle of an interstate, but nothing hit me. I didn't even get a scratch. My parents put me into mental hospitals, but I kept on being a problem I guess. That was when I started cutting myself to taste the blood."

"It's not like you can walk up to someone and say, 'Hi, I'm a vampire. Can I drink your blood?'"

He shows me the scars on his wrists and arms. "Sometimes it would be here on my arms, other times it would be on my leg or shoulder. It was a real drive, a need. Next they sent me to a military school, and I got kicked out a month before graduation. My parents wouldn't let me back in the house."

"So I ended up on the streets of Indianapolis with only the shirt on my back. I started being a criminal, just to be able to eat. I'd steal cars, stick up people at cash machines, run packages, that kind of thing."

"I got arrested a couple of times, on misdemeanours, until finally the judge made me enlist in the army. I went infantry, served in Desert Storm, and made E4 when I got back. There was this squad leader under me who kept on going over my head. I'd get the squad in position for firing, go out to spot, and when I'd get back he'd moved the whole damn squad. He did it a lot. Finally, I lost control and started beating him over the head with an E tool." He laughs. "I'd have used my fists, but that wouldn't do any damage to a guy in a kevlar helmet. I was brought up on charges of inappropriate behaviour, and I left with a section 1412C misconduct."

"So there I was, back on the streets of Indianapolis with nothing to eat, so I went back to being a criminal. I was a member of the Guardian Angels for a while, but me and this guy another

Angel stopped in this church to use a phone and got arrested for burglary. Then, for a while, I'd go to Chicago to fight, for money. The black dragons up there have gambling on fights, and well, I needed the money. Then I ended up in jail, and finally I met February."

February smiles again, broadly. "We met for the first time in the mall. He was seeing someone else and so was I. We talked for a little while, and I didn't see him for about six months. One night, when I was sitting on my porch, he walked by, and we started talking."

"It was like we were made for each other." He says.

Her face returns to passive. "You see, my parents were really quacked. I grew up in Galveston, and somehow my father convinced my mother that my mother's sister's daughter..."

"Your cousin."

"All right, somehow he convinced her that my cousin should be his live in mistress. So she lived with us for a long time, and then my father went to jail. I ended up going to Key school, and that was great. They try to teach you to understand yourself, to grow as a person. There was this guy at school, when I was in the ninth grade, who was a vampire. One day he just laid it out on the table, told me all about himself, about myself. That scared the hell out of me. Then, later, I knew this guy who was a warlock. He killed himself, and that did something to me. I mean, here I was, catholic, and all of this weird shit was going on around me."

She takes another sip of coffee. "And I was really involved with the church, back then. I don't go to church now, but I'm still involved with God. I just don't know who he is any more. And somehow I don't think he'd like what I am."

They stop speaking for a few moments and sip their coffee. February nibbles on her sweet roll while Jeremy stares at his reflection in the window. They seem to be fighting inner battles, as if they're wondering how far they can trust me.

Finally, he speaks.

"Feeding...it effects everything."

February sets aside the roll. "Yeah. Every now and then we have to hunt." Her face is grim. "If we go too long without hunting, we start to fight really bad. And if we can't hunt we drink from each other, but I don't like that. I don't like to drink Jeremy's blood."

"It ties her stomach up in knots."

"It ties her stomach up in knots."

"Before I drink his blood, I'll go out and hunt animals. That's better than nothing."

Jeremy's fingers tap the table, and the vibrations make ripples in the water glasses. "Here's how we do it."

I always feed the same way, but I try not to hurt the guys from the rave parties. They're usually doped up, so they don't feel anything."

"If there's not a Rave party going on we'll find a bar. February goes in, and looks around until she finds some guy to pick up. Then she'll take him somewhere to a hotel room, or under a bridge, or, hell, once she just took him around the back of the bar."

"They're always sickoes." She says. "I get them excited, ready for me,..... Then I'd feed. That's how I always feed."

"That's when I come up." Jeremy says. "Most of the time they were trying something sick, and that's enough to drive me over the edge. People like that...I wouldn't want to

"Rave parties are better, though." He says.

"Yeah. The rave parties are these wild dances, with drugs and bisexuality. There are a lot of people there who want to experiment. They come up to you, if they know, and say 'I want to be a vampire. Will you show

me how?' So we show them. Anyways, I always feed the same way, but I try not to hurt the guys from the rave parties. They're usually doped up, so they don't feel anything."

They are quiet again. February is picking at the remains of her cinnamon roll, and occasionally Jeremy will reach over and pull a piece off with his fingers. He seems to be lost in thought for a moment, and then begins talking to his reflection.

"We're not that different from normal people. We have dreams just like everyone else."

"We'd like to find some place

and I die with that cat. A friend of mine says that I was a wolf in a past life."

His eyes remain on his reflection. "I have that dream all the time."

February is 17. Jeremy is 20.

A question remains unanswered with the close of this interview, and that is, were they telling the truth?

I believe so, but it is up to the reader to determine that for himself. Two individuals, wanted on counts of multiple murder in Illinois, Iowa and Indiana, were arrested a few weeks after the interview. They matched the descriptions of Jeremy and February, but I never saw their picture. If it was them, and they were convicted, then they most probably are still in jail. It is possible, however, that these two still hunt (if they do hunt) in the American mid-west.

W.L.H.

An anonymous survey was actually carried out in the 1980's. Researcher Norine Dresser conducted her survey among her students. The aim? To find out whether people really do believe that vampires may exist.

The question was "Do you believe it is possible that vampires exist as real entities?"

The test subjects, of which there were over 500, were predominately US and English (though 32 other nationalities were represented) and ranged from 15-63 years of age.

The result was 27% stated that they believed it was actually possible.



Jemma Johnson

live on the same earth as they do. The things they try to do to her...."

"Are you sure it isn't jealousy?" She asks, and her tone is playful.

"It's not jealousy. It's them. Well, anyways, I feed on them along with her. When we're finished, we just leave them there."

"My first kill, it seemed like the world stood still." She turns to Jeremy. "Did that guy die?"

"He was alive when we left."

Their tone is friendly, unworried, as if they were exchanging recipes.

we can live. No white picket fence, but a house." Her look changes to match his. "A steady job. Money in the bank."

"The chance to lead a normal life, with the fact that we're vampires kept under cover. I'd like to get involved with Law, be a lawyer, or at least a paralegal."

"I'd like to be a nurse, and own a used book store."

"I have this dream," He says. "I'm a wolf, and I run with a pack. Then one day there's this cat I've injured, a house cat. It's hurt, and I take care of it. The pack leaves me. I age, I grow old,

WALKING THE PATH TO MICROSOFT HELL

There is a really old adage in business that you "give away the razors to sell the blades." The logic is that I can give you a razor, but the catch is, if you like using it, you have to buy more blades.

In any market, all you have to do is look to identify what are the razors and what are the blades. In computers, the computer itself is the razor. You buy it once. Therefore, the software are the blades. You buy them all the time. In the telephone business, phone companies will all but give you a cell phone...only to require you to buy a year's activation at some ungodly fee.

Have you noticed that Microsoft Explorer is getting around on the Internet? This is because, unlike Netscape, Microsoft Explorer is free. So, Microsoft Explorer is the Razor... What possibly could be the catch? What good does it do for Bill Gates to toss out millions of copies of millions of dollars worth of software? The answer lies in the path...to control the world.

Ode to the Humanitarians

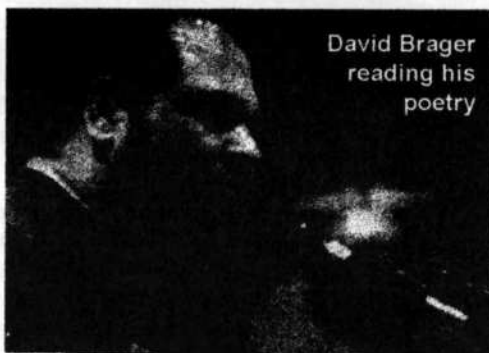
There is a strong difference between humanitarianism and business. In humanitarian values, success is based upon the welfare and growth of people, based upon the enrichment of values other than money. In business, to succeed is to show growth through market acceptance, which is measured in dollars.

Microsoft has been flooding the markets with free software. For example, if you want a media server from your Internet provider so that you can provide streaming audio and, in time, video, you can buy the best on the market from Progressive Networks for \$100 per stream, or from Netscape for \$95, but Microsoft's own version is free. How can anyone compete?

The ploy, it would seem, is the crush and conquer method. No one can compete with free, so for a time, all other companies would go out of business while Microsoft becomes the accepted standard. Once this is truly accomplished, phase two would then be to create an enhanced environment that calls all of these free media platforms into unified existence, and then to begin charging.

This technique is not new. John McAfee did it with his McAfee's Anti-Virus software for quite a while. Once his became the standard, he then enforced a licensing structure for professional computer site uses, and was able to command a good return. McAfee now owns and gives away PowWow communicator (www.tribal.com).

However, when one company that has as much control over our lives as Microsoft appears to command, what is left is not just better business profits for Microsoft, but a powerplay by Bill Gates to become world commander of the Internet. With the amount of power that he will employ, and, given, that his programs have been licensed



David Brager
reading his
poetry

with the possibility that Microsoft may be able to back-connect into your computer and check you out while you are checking the internet out, leaves many unanswered questions.

Beware of Hidden Agendas

So, what we have seen is Microsoft, aka Bill Gates, has been giving away the razors, but not telling us what the blades are, or how much they will cost. I can tell you that I don't expect them to come cheap.

What if one day your computer locks you out and tells you these platforms are no longer free? What if this program were to encrypt everything on your hard drive that is Microsoft's products under this licensing enforcement? It would force you to pay. You have changed your life to function around an existing set of behaviours using specific applications. There would be no better form of electronic extortion. By trusting the goodness of an egotistically driven control freak, it is to be questioned as to how can there be anything good for everyone in the outcome.

The Rude Awakening

If you had not seen it coming, I just wanted to open up your mind a bit so that you might see more clearly. The world, as we know it, is in a very precarious position, and Bill Gates is holding the strings. He is beginning to behave like a tyrant, as he is setting himself for a position of absolute power.

THE David Brager

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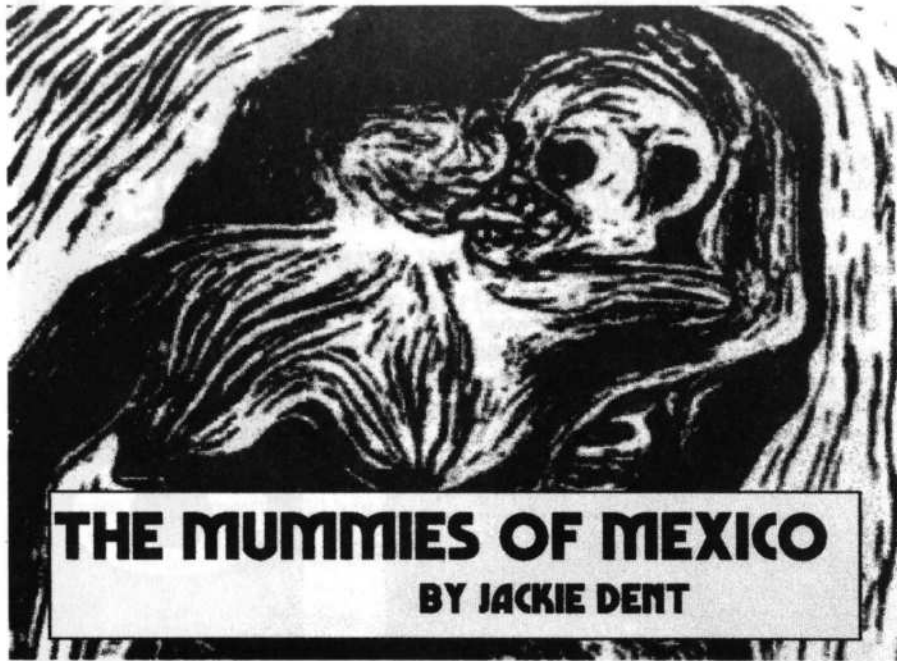
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The time for the birth of the Resistance is upon us. We must gather and defend, giving stronger support to the non-free platforms in the Internet, or all our lives could be destroyed at the push of a single button. It's not atomic weapons this time, but informational chaos and disorder...and the man to destroy us all will be Bill Gates.
(c) 1997 David I. Brager

DAVID BRAGER <http://www.owt.com/users/dibrager>



THE MUMMIES OF MEXICO

BY JACKIE DENT

The museum of Mummies in Guanajuato in Mexico has 108 mummies on display, all mysteriously preserved and all paupers pulled from the local cemetery. Jackie Dent reports

"It makes me want to get cremated," said Elisa. "The way their skulls hang open look as if everyone of them is screaming to be buried," said Erin. When I asked the guy from Guanajuato's Municipal Government Offices about the city's largest money spinner: "Essentially you are just looking at Cadavers."

About 108 cadavers to be precise, all exhumed from the local Guanajuato cemetery since 1865, and now on display in simple glass cases with red carpet as bedding, and a small cream pillow resting under their heads. Some wear socks, some have tufts of pubic hairs, some still wear their turn of century costume and some have shoes. For most of them though, their leathery skin is their only attire: dried thigh flesh hangs like a pair of shorts over bones and disintegrating strips of straw cover a hand as if it is a glove.

All of them have slackened jaws which certainly gives them the appearance of screaming, although Carlos Martinez, my fidgety tour guide, who has worked here for nearly 25 years, assures me that apart from then woman who was buried alive, the rest are merely exhibiting the after effects of death. While the Egyptian mummies came about through the expertise of ancient mortuary workers, there is no scientific explanation for why the bodies from the Guanajuato cemetery are mummified. Although

most guide books mention that it is the minerals in the soil that conserve these corpses, Carlos Martinez says it's the crypts that preserve the mummies.

"In our local cemetery there are two ways of burial - one of them is in the ground and the other is in the crypts of the walls that line the cemetery. While most people think that the bodies are conserved in the ground, they are actually mummified in the crypts because it is very dry. In the ground nobody is conserved because humidity



destroys the body. We don't know exactly what kind of mineral gases conserve the body but we think it is because of mineral gases because gold, silver and copper were once mined in Guanajuato."

"Unlike the Egyptians who used chemicals and removed organs to conserve the body, these bodies are not embalmed and the process is totally natural," says Carlos.

Most of the mummies are naked Mexicans, except for a Chinese woman and two French doctors (who have both been in the museum for nearly 130 years). Possibly the world's only mummified foetus is on display, next to his mother who died during Caesarean section. Babies are dressed as Saints or Virgins, a tradition common in Mexico, while others are in plastic nappies and booties. Some of the mummies have bloodstains from internal bleeding and one man appears to have been shot or stabbed. A Mexican cowboy with a moustache stands dead in his costume in his glass case.

No stories exist about any of these people and only a few bear names - fading shreds of paper rest against some bodies, with hand writing in that luscious turn of the century script: "Simon Lozano 1900, exhumed 1907" and "Juan Saramillo 1903". The only fact that is known about all of these people is that they were the poorest of the poor and reflective of this is that 80 percent of them are women.

And this is the cruellest thing about this museum - it profits because people were poor and still are. None of these mummies had family or relatives to keep up the rent at the local cemetery - plots these days are

about 40 pesos (\$9 Australian dollars), for three years, or the perpetuated rates are about \$50 for 25 years. All of these paupers were given another 2 year waiting period in the ground and when no money showed up, up come the corpse. If it happened to be mummified, the body was put on display and all other bodies that weren't in good enough condition were cremated.

Guanajuato's public cemetery was founded in 1860. The Catholic

church ran all of Mexico's cemeteries back then and the church which set up the museum in 1865 after finding the mummies were an obvious curiosity. There is a public register which has the dates for when the rent is due so the system of exhumation still operates today to create more space in the graveyard. Cemetery workers are looking for other mummies and the most recent display is a man exhumed in 1984 and a baby who if alive, could be one of the hundreds of school children who come through the museum each day.

The museum harnesses the macabre to the extreme by also hanging portraits of dead people, a tradition Carlos says was popular amongst poorer people. The photographs are a relieving contrast to the dried yellow corpses, for the portraits are actually quite beautiful. A family usually surrounds the beloved, all dressed in their best clothes with touching glances across their faces. At times the photographer has gone for a close up which reveals partially open eyes and a sleeplike serenity.



To counter these elegant death shots, cartoons from the famous Mexican painter Jose Guadalupe Posada also adorn the walls: skeletons laughing, skeletons getting drunk, skeletons dancing, skeletons lolling about in clothes on couches. "In Mexico we see the dead as friends, for the dead are always near to us," comments Carlos.

"In Australia, we are afraid of dying." Carlos laughs, "We are too, but we see that they are still our friends."
 "Are Mexicans obsessed with death?"
 "No. No, we see it as something natural."
 "Being a Catholic, do you think there is anything bad about having a body on display?"
 "Some of the people don't like this."
 "Why?"
 "Some of the people think the bodies should be in the cemetery. While other people, they like to see the

mummies because although they are not beautiful, they are interesting."

The entrance to the cemetery or PANTEON in Guanajuato is charmingly peaceful compared to the scurry outside the museum. There are no vendors hustling to sell you the traditional charamuscos lolly of Guanajuato which for the sake of tourism has been shaped like a mummy. There is no souvenir shop with lighters, hats, batteries, film, shirts and key rings. It's almost quite strange that nobody is interested in seeing the graveyard where the famous Guanajuato mummies are from. The cemetery, instead, is quite small with modest plots hedged by huge concrete crypts or BOVIDAS, at least 10 people high and 30 people along, the types of burial common throughout Latin America.

Juan Carlos Lopez Morales is the quiet cemetery administrator who in his thirties has worked here since he was a boy - it is a family tradition and his grandfather worked here years ago. He shows me the common graveyard where all the infamous mummies come

from with nonchalance, indicating to the crypts and the dusty tombs. He has exhumed around 20 mummies from this cemetery for the museum in his lifetime.

He says the mummies come from the crypts and the ground. Surprised, I tell him about my tour guide Carlos, who says the bodies only come from the crypts. He smiles as he shrugs his shoulders saying the tour guides say whatever they want, "Fantasias." Juan believes the mummies from this cemetery are preserved more because of the quality of their lives and this accounts for the large numbers of old women in the museum. "They were poor, but they lived their life in tranquillity."

He indicates to his grandmothers' small crypt in a nearby wall which is marked as number '4'. When his next relative dies they will go into the same space too - some of these crypts have four

family member in one tomb to save money. "I don't like cremation because to be buried is part of the cycle of life - when you die and the worms eat you it is like a natural process."

Juan walked me out of the common cemetery to the wealthier section, retrieving keys from his pocket as we walked. He opened a large white gate that lead into a high ceiling concrete room with a small religious altar to one side. On the other side rested a coffin, large and grey.

"You have a mummy here?"

"Yes."

"How long has it been here for?"

"Since 1994."

He gently rested the coffin on the ground and opened the lid. I felt very strange about being shown a person who had been dead for 7 years and moved about slightly restlessly thinking how in spit of my nerves, I had always wanted to see inside a coffin. The inside white fabric was torn and fading, and Juan simply ripped the fading yellow paper surrounding the corpse. I saw a face with teeth and dried bits of leathery flesh, probably not the best mummy, but a mummy nonetheless. His handling of her face wasn't particularly careful of anthropological.

"She was very old."

"Did you know her?"

"No."

"What is her name?"

"I could look in the records."

It seems this woman was exhumed in 1994 after nobody turned up to pay the bills and Juan says she is lying in wait because there has been an argument between the PRI Municipal Government and the PAN State Government of Guanajuato about who owns her potentially lucrative body. Juan doesn't know when or where her body will go and is just waiting for orders. "We are just slaves to the government."

The State Government of Guanajuato ran the museum up until August when the Governor Vicente Fox Quesada handed the running and profits back to the local council. And no wonder there was wrangling - the museum made about \$1.2 million in 1995 - 96 and this kind of cash doesn't pop up often in Mexico. The money made from the museum is now going back to the people of Guanajuato in the form of infrastructure and projects for the poor. JD

By William L. Fox

I.

The exact amount of land, the actual percentage of Nevada that's under siege by the American military at any one given time is impossible to gauge.

The United States government owns at least 85% of Nevada — most of which lies within the Great Basin, that driest and emptiest part of the state where all waters flow inward and none out — and where increasingly large chunks of public property is being reconfigured by bombs, rockets, munitions depots, and classified research laboratories.

They control so much land for the pleasure of fighter pilots and other military personnel that they themselves lose track of it, often bombing outside the officially designated areas on adjacent cattle grazing ranges. To say that the left hand of the military doesn't know what its right hand is doing out in the middle of this great empty would be overstating what the public is told about covert activities in Nevada. Add to that the fact that the Department of Energy controls vast tracts for nuclear weapons testing and "other projects," and it's no wonder that there's an entire class of American citizens devoted to paranoia about "what goes on out there." It's not just a matter of secrecy, but worse, genuine confusion.

This is a good place to collect Unidentified Flying Objects. Where else would you be more likely to find the ultimate "Other" than in what is not only the emptiest place in America, but the most tightly sealed off, the most secretive enclave of American power? There are valleys deep in the Basin where strange aircraft are said to perform impossible manoeuvres at night — installations so sensitive that the Secretary of Energy has withdrawn hundreds of square miles surrounding them from public use so that no one can look down upon the operations there. Such secrecy attracts mass speculation, and provides the perfect proving ground for our imagination. The desert is an empty screen upon which we project

our deepest need to confront the alien, that other tribe so mysterious and different from us that all human beings will be confirmed as brothers and sisters at last. And no matter what it is that the military is really up to in the Nevada wasteland, it's produced a sort of cargo cult based on supposed UFO

Reno is one of the Great Basin border towns, an older and dowdier sister to Las Vegas, but still a relatively rowdy jumping off point for citizens crossing the hundreds of miles of arid basin-and-range to Salt Lake City. And like all those commercial stations at the edge

of the great American Void, it proclaims the marketplace at full volume, glittering with neon and reflective billboards. Where once casino highrises hosted signs advertising the pleasures therein, now they assume ever more fantastical architecture, as they become signs in themselves. This transformation of built environment into signage is symptomatic of our culture's ongoing and elaborate manifestation of the marketplace — and it fascinates Barker. Putting up little pieces of it on the wall, packaging the packaging, isn't a large or stringent enough commentary, however.

Hence, the SCHWA Corporation.

According to the mock dictionary listing in the first SCHWA chapbook, self-published on photocopier machines in 1992, the word means: "n. The indeterminate vowel sound of most syllables not stressed in English, as the a in alone, the e in debris, the i in sanity, etc. 2. The phonic symbol denoting that sound (upside down e). 3. Any strange or unexplained occurrence." What follows are thirty-five line drawings done by hand depicting the alien invasion of a planet peopled with "stick-people". There are beamed abductions, mass hysteria, a resistance movement, the coercive brainwashing of the populace, existential despair and suicide — along with sly self-references, a vaguely Marxian critique of capitalist society, sight gags and double-takes, and some genuinely disturbing commentary on the American propensity to suspend its disbelief while watching television's pseudo-documentary show "The X-Files." Still, almost no one got it, despite the postscript in the back of later editions by writer Ivan Stang, which proclaimed SCHWA as a book not so much about UFO's as about "religion, belief, self-subjugation and all control systems."



Bill Barker

sightings. But instead of its practitioners living on a post-WWII South Pacific island and worshipping remnants of old bombers, these send e-mail messages around the world, publish innumerable magazines and books about the objects of obsession, and purchase ungodly amounts of high-powered optical and video equipment in search of incontrovertible proof that the military is hiding alien spacecraft in the desert. Into this rather complicated part of the collective American mind steps Bill Barker, an unassuming 40-ish man living in Reno who specializes in deconstructing the intersection of desire and visual manifestation — to wit, advertising. Having worked concurrently as a professional graphic designer and exhibiting visual artist, it's perhaps not surprising that advertising would become the subject of the art. In two series of "product" works done in the late 80's and early 90's, and shown in both Las Vegas and Reno, he exhibited plastic baggies filled with cardboard packaging materials and dime store toys, not only asking us to examine the value of advertising and packages, versus the value of the products, but also completing the circle from applied graphic art to commerce and back to gallery art. The show was at once minimal — small pieces in series on the wall — but forcefully grounded in the late 20th-century territory of capitalist discourse. Almost no one got it.

Barker's drawing style was primarily reductionist and geometric, blocky white buildings contrasted against the ever-present black sky. The stark scenes dominate and submit the stick characters to an "alienation" from even their own cartoon nature. Alien spaceships lurk ominously in the background, a visual motif reinforced to an obsessive level with ovoid shapes assuming even the shape of tap handles above the bathtub. These highly abstracted, emblematic schema of colonisation are serial, but not sequential — there's no real narrative, just the compulsive exploration of a bad dream.



Bill Barker

DARE TO BE DIFFICULT.

By late 1993 Barker was preparing the second volume, COUNTER-SCHWA, as well as alien invasion survival and detection kits, calendars and point-of-purchase goody bags (back to those plastic bags stapled on the walls) — and things were getting scary. The picto-glyphic style Stang wrote about in the first book was getting denser and tougher, the images more deeply militaristic. The stick-people's civilisation has now been thoroughly colonised by paranoia, the oval heads of the aliens part and parcel of their civic architecture. There are alien angels and Hitchcockian birds as co-conspirators, and the ovoid shape appears on school buses. The invasion has moved beyond the external pacification of space to a pandemic of indifference throughout the population. Suicide has given way to a self-imposed imprisonment both physical — barbed wire appears frequently — and mental. There's also an increasing amount of text embedded in the book. The original

SCHWA drawings contained a few buildings labelled "school," "flesh," and "fear," and so forth, and the occasional satirical "instruction", such as: "Telepathy Alarm: The figure at left will let you know when your 'Thoughts' are being scanned! SCHWA Corp. is not responsible for any lack of content on your part."

COUNTER-SCHWA has now given text more prominence. A two-lane highway enters an empty region obviously reminiscent of Nevada and monitored by a lone spacecraft in the distance; the viewer is warned by a road sign of the "Meaningless Area Next 95 Miles." The relationship between compulsive behaviour and religion is formulated more strongly and overtly in new instructions: "Divine Intervention Stamp: Good for one (1) act of divine intervention. Weekdays and Saturdays not included in this offer." Or: "Zen X-Ray Sticker: Put this amazing sticker on anything and look inside. Warning: Objects are really 99.999% empty space!" Advertising, religion and existentialist paranoia are neatly conflated within the language of telemarketing.

Back on Earth, SCHWA was now being adopted by the alien cultists and showing up on the international marketing radar screens. Newspaper and magazine articles about SCHWA and interviews with the artist (who refused to have his face fully photographed) were appearing in various corners of the art 'zine kingdom. T-shirts, bands adopting the name, pirated images on the Internet, calls from Tower Records.... Soon, Barker was hiring a crew to help package and mail SCHWA kits, sorting through hundreds of orders daily. Revenues increased 350% the first year of business and nearly 650% the second (a trend that's slowly levelling off — the company is projected to only double its revenues in 1996). In short, the American dream come true, a triumph of self-initiative and home-marketeering. And, while many readers were definitely into various degrees of SCHWA worship, and the chapbooks with their ephemera were becoming collector's items, most people were only getting part of the picture.

SCHWA isn't either a prediction of doom, nor a fantasy about aliens; it's a corporate art project. It's irrelevant to Barker whether or not there are aliens; what's important to him as both artist and entrepreneur is that the myth of the alien may be the most easily accessed theme of our subconscious. He's turned UFO's — or our shared perceptions of them, including the archetypal ovoid head with huge slanted eyes — into a conceptual and

literal exploration of media and marketing. The point is neither the aliens, nor the selling of the merchandise, nor the process of developing an image into value-added products, but rather to build a many-mirrored hall wherein we watch ourselves consuming. To do so in Nevada, where not only aliens are presumed by some to have landed and abducted citizens, but where the architecture has become the signage of coercive marketing (just as it does in the stick-people cities) is both natural and ingenious. Barker is responding to his visual and metaphorical environment, both commenting on it and, to the degree that one can now buy SCHWA items in local stores, physically participating in its formation.

A few cultists are becoming more than cranky with Barker, accusing him of a commercial hoax and rip-off, which is of course part of the very point they're missing (which may be an attribute that helps make them fit subjects for cults in the first place). Some writers covering Barker have at least gotten as far as labelling SCHWA a spoof, or just another one of those weird artists fooling around. At least that's addressing the actual business of many artists, who recognise that play is one of the most intense forms of human expression that literally can be measured on an electroencephalograph. That Barker is using the arena of commercial art, of graphic design and cartoons and books, to fulfill a "fine art" conceptual project is an added layer of irony most people will miss, if for no other reason than that art critics will avoid writing about Barker precisely because he's perceived as a part of commerce, not art.

Barker is consciously tweaking the art world's continued distinction between fine and commercial art, between high and low art culture. This is about as close as anyone can get to having your cake and eating it, too. After all, he's running a successful business based on a conceptual art project, which puts him somewhere between R. Crumb and Andy Warhol. He's not only dissecting in print the process of commerce, he's turned it into a cottage industry cranking out point-of-purchase displays, which sell the message through the very hands he's biting — and for the most part he's having fun doing it.

Beyond the fact that he guards his personal history with some care, we know that Bill Barker was born in Los Angeles in December of 1957, the year and month of the first Sputnik launch. When he was ten, his parents moved with their nine children from south central LA to Orange County, which was undergoing an incredible building boom. Mr. Barker and his four sons escaped in their spare time by rockhounding in the Mohave Desert, a couple of hours' drive Northeast from the endless suburbia, and the artist recalls his attraction to the desert as "a yearning for something you can't quite remember."

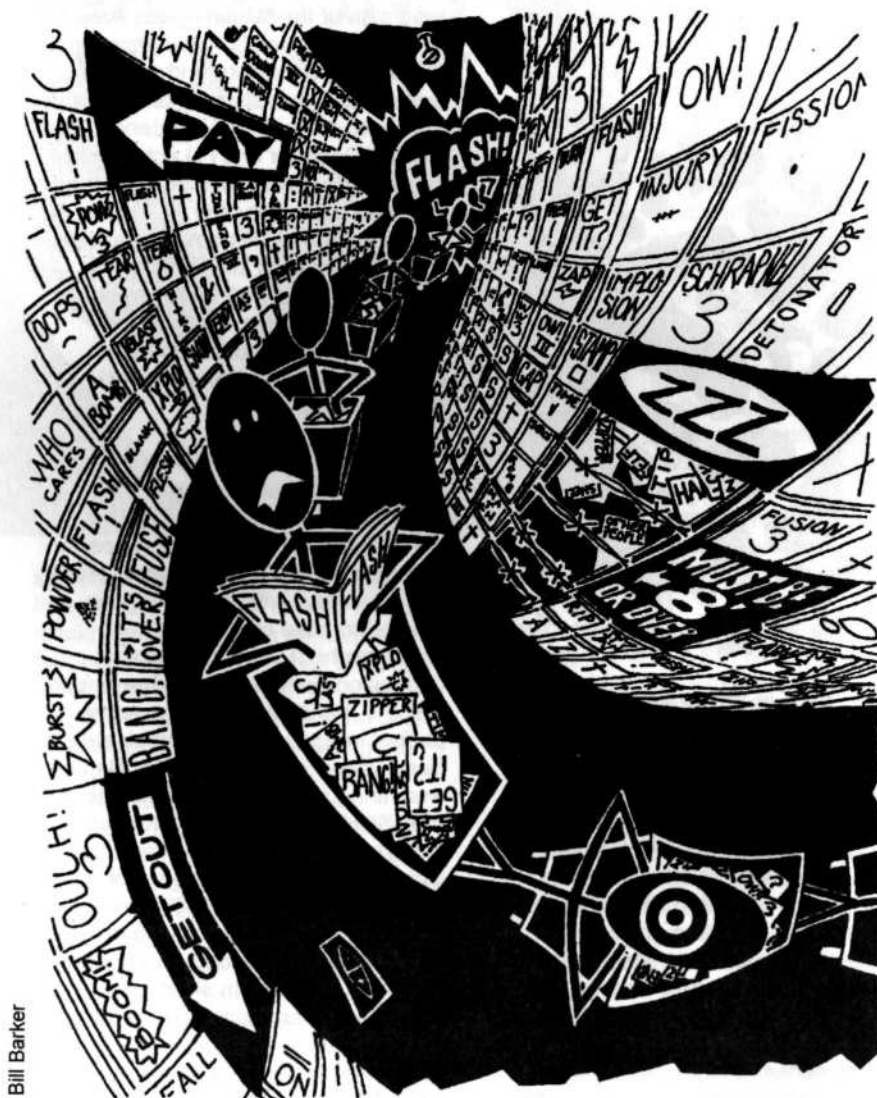
Barker progressed from model building into art making by the time he reached high school, eventually earning an Associate of Art degree from the Orange Coast College of Costa Mesa in 1980. He's worked as a commercial artist from 1977 until the present, and moved to Reno in 1983 to become the art director for an ad agency. He's been an illustrator and graphic designer, and in addition to his experience in photography, model building, sculpture and painting, has also worked in video, silkscreening, copy writing, direct mail and print production. In short, he's accumulated the complete toolbox necessary for a guerrilla artist to plumb the depths of advertising. He's also a person who grew up more with books than television, who reads in philosophy, history, and psychology, and who also maintains a profound appreciation for "low" culture. A prime example of the latter is his taste in automobiles, manifesting itself as a 1977 Ford LTD with gold paint, a white landau top, and a harvest gold interior. Barker cruises the desert on solitary weekend drives, describing this

cherished piece of nostalgia as "a couch with wings." His living quarters just west of downtown Reno are extremely modest, rooms from an old motel bungalow converted into an apartment, which Barker has scrupulously reconverted back into something resembling a motel. For awhile the dust jacket from the book *Man's Conquest of Space* hung on the living room wall.

While he won't profess to a political

early 90s to help finance both the early SCHWA chapbooks and the formation of the company.

When Barker exhibited his two "product series" in community galleries at the turn of the decade, he attempted to construct the illusion that his art pieces were commercially manufactured in quantity. The individual items in sandwich bags were stapled to pegboards, like trinkets in a dime



party, having gone apolitical sometime around 1980, he's a cynical liberal who considers SCHWA Corporation a small business incubator for creative people who want to produce commercial products. He disdains the fine art world in general, contemptuous of the hypocrisy perpetuated by both university arts departments and galleries, which he considers simply manifestations of commerce hiding behind a scrim of high culture and higher education. It's therefore no little irony, and one he appreciates, that he needed small public grants from the Nevada State Council on the Arts in the

store. And, while the illusion didn't work on a literal level — we're far too conditioned as viewers to accept anything in a gallery space as "real" — it was a kind of sketch for what would soon follow with SCHWA. Barker was still operating with one foot inside the hypercritical cube of the white gallery space, a cultural convention too strong for him to overcome. Even an installation artist like Jenny Holzer, who reigns supreme in the field, doesn't often fight the gallery space, but simply escapes it. "Protect me from what I want" and "The beginning of the war

will be secret" — examples of Holzer's cultural quips — have made their point by pervading mass media. They are effective precisely because they've appeared in the "real" world, in venues such as the electronic reader boards of the Las Vegas Strip and Times Square. Barker, younger by years than Holzer, was still casting about for the right arena in which to explore the relationship between art and commerce.

gathering initial reactions from friends and then quickly producing a second set of drawings, he bound them into photocopied chapbooks. From there it was a relatively short step to actually manufacturing SCHWA keychains and point-of-purchase displays. Instead of critiquing the world from within the safety of the gallery, a strategy with only very limited possibilities for success, Barker was now outside playing on the streets. Instead of imitating and mocking commerce, he became commerce in a new way, much

let's say, an act committed by terrorists, or an act constructed by a government to implicate terrorists, or an act contrived by a television network to sell advertising. "SCHWA" itself is defined as an indefinite, indeterminate sound, and becomes for the artist a signal of that confusion. The face is satirical because it leads us back to the notion that someone else is causing the confusion, when in fact it is our own political and corporate desires that are the root cause. When desire

Bill Barker



Logic Error Detector: When talking with friends, you will be confronted with false logic. This handy Boron™ coated strip tells you when.

For more information on alien defense send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Schwa, Box 6064 Reno NV 89513

The other matter he had to resolve was how to avoid becoming just like the art world he was seeking to evade. For over two decades a dominant strain in contemporary art has been cultural critique, which often manifests itself through cryptic installations requiring a text on the wall or an interpretative catalogue. Without such guides, viewers have trouble understanding the intentions of the artist, the context of the criticism, and therefore even the piece of art itself. For instance, Felix Gonzales Torres hangs long strings of bare lightbulbs from gallery ceilings, each bulb as it burns out symbolising the death of someone from AIDS. The work is a touching memorial — if it's properly labelled so you can unlock the meaning, or you're an artworld insider. It's work that holds its distance from the world, being more about the world than of it. Once you get the idea behind his kind of installation, you move on. It doesn't continue to resonate emotionally, to kick up the underwater sands of the subconscious. Barker's "product series" were still too close to artistic critique, and despite his disdain, looking very much like a graduate student installation. But in an article about the Reno "product" show, there's a hint of what's coming when Barker states: "Imagine a planet made entirely of merchandise."

In the summer of 1992, a friend gave the artist an article called "The Secret Government," which outlined the conspiracy theory that the world has been controlled by aliens since the 1940s. And Barker experienced a key epiphany in which his political scepticism, cultural disappointments, and marketing toolbox merged. The first set of SCHWA drawings were done in just a few days; after

as Holzer entered into the advertising arena. While Barker is operating in a manner fundamentally different than Holzer, he has also accomplished something similar — creating accessible art using commercial/industrial mechanisms we all understand at the experiential level. We actually feel something while being offered an opportunity to think. If we don't at first fully appreciate the levels of social critique, we still react to the aliens and their invasion. Barker has successfully made the transition from gallery to Tower Records while maintaining the integrity of his convictions. The many-mirrored hall reflecting our consumption is at first playful, then provocative; you're in too deep, looking at the satirical drawings and seduced by the myth of the alien, and before you know it you're wondering about the parallels between government propaganda and merchandising, between our desire to consume and to be governed.

Now we're approaching the real crux of what's going on in SCHWA, where Barker's premonition statement about the world being made of merchandise combines with our paranoia over being governed by an unseen force. It's related to what Jenny Holzer and other artists successfully using public media, such as Barbara Kruger with her billboards and magazine ads, are getting at — making apparent our desire, which is the unseen force. We are, as always, the aliens, and it's at the unexamined nexus of desire and power where we are all too often governed. Barker, when asked why he chose the classic alien ovoid face as the basis for his drawings, defines it as a satirical symbol for our contemporary confusion, our inability to distinguish between what's real and what's not — between,

meets power it manifests itself through government and big business. As Barker put it in an interview

"SCHWA products are the symbols used to communicate the company's concerns about power and control. Realistically, the essentials of life are gaining power or avoiding being subject to it. Individuals, by definition, are powerless in themselves, and only gain power to the extent that they cede their unique characteristics to a group — products and their marketing are simply the predominant systems of gaining power currently in use.... There is already a strong movement to remake government into a corporation, and modern businesses use the language of warfare, traditionally the realm of the classic state, to describe their operations. Corporate analysts predict we will see an increasing number of corporate sponsorships of governmental interests in the future; Disney's civil war theme park is a current example. Public policy decisions will have to consider product placement."

Barker considers politics to be properly the realm, the business if you will, of the artist and the designer. SCHWA is thus one-third moral imperative, one-third dispassionate observer, and one-third mythic cartooning, all of it enabled through a commercial corporation a la Warhol. Barker saves himself from assuming a position of moral superiority — the downfall of most political art and its practitioners — by becoming what he criticizes. The "product series" work cost him four years and thousands of dollars

in materials, and nothing ever sold. There was no way to make a living room out of the gallery, so to speak, and Barker was forced to move out into the metaphorical street by sheer economics. As a result, his feet are firmly on the ground of humble self-awareness; he has no apparent illusions about his complicity in the marketing of art.

further notice. Thank you. THE SCHWA CORPORATION."

III.

The SCHWA drawings continue to mount up, never sequential or narrative, and "relentlessly incomprehensible" as Barker gleefully admits, despite pleas from numerous readers for him to "tell the story." In

drawings of the maze-like SCHWA cities, with its linked cubicles of stick-people frantically performing those "relentlessly incomprehensible" tasks under the scrutiny of the aliens hovering overhead, you get some idea of how Barker would design such a palace of paranoia. How perfect for Nevada, a casino for the aliens among us, a convention center for cultists. Not only would this maze of our desire and power be visually much more interesting than the recreation of the Old West behind a bank of slot machines, but instead of our being deliberately numbed to reality, we might actually be awakened to it. That is, after all, the genius of art and myth, to tell us the story of our lives.

We inspect our lives by getting outside of ourselves — by creating aliens to look back at us, whether it's the sad robots in movies of the 1950s decrying our addiction to nuclear weaponry, or the intergalactic predatory creatures of imperial colonialism in the 90s — or, for that matter, the white whale of Moby Dick, the monsters faced by Jason and the Argonauts, or the creatures slain in Navaho mythology, leaving behind body remnants as towers of sandstone in Monument Valley. It's apparently an old habit of ours. The notion that this century invented a literature and art which are simultaneously reflective of our world and self-aware is a bit short-sighted. There's always someone like Barker around, smart enough to understand the systems of our delusion, intuitive enough to tap the relevant myth, and skilled enough to manufacture tokens that look like the real thing. Slouched behind the steering wheel of his mammoth Ford sedan, cruising past the desiccated bombing ranges where the Stealth aircraft were developed, Barker continues to tunnel his way through the subconscious of capitalism. He's thinking up a new way to merchandise us to ourselves. Will it be a new version of the "Alien Survival Kit," a limited stock offering, or a model of the "Burrower Mach 1A" for carving out underground cities, one of the initial products from the newly formed Eldritch Company? Whatever it is, it won't be any stranger than what he sees outside the window.

Those with web access:
<http://www.theschwacorporation.com/>
happy paranoia.....



There's a SCHWA drawing from 1995 that illustrates the point. A series of helicopters appears from the vanishing point at the "rear" of the page and flies toward the viewer, so we feel as if we're immersed in a swarm flying past us. Each one bears as its cockpit the alien face. The helicopter bodies appear to be constructed of crisscrossed structural members, until we realise that they're stick-people, arms up and legs spread in quasi-squadron formation. Once again, the aliens are up front controlling the stick-people. On the bottom of the helicopters? The SCHWA logo. Barker and his corporation are one and the same, the desire and the power his. Here's the caption to the drawing:

"BECAUSE of heavy processing requirements, we are currently using some of your unused brain capacity for backup processing. Please ignore any hallucinations, voices or unusual dreams you may experience. Avoid all concentration-intensive tasks until

addition to packaging new SCHWA trinkets in a Reno warehouse (which bears eerie resemblance to an installation-in-progress), he's working on the "SCHWA World Operations Manual," a book project that outlines how to "run an Earth-like planet" — a planet made of merchandise and subverted by advertising and the sale of glow-in-the-dark t-shirts.

The end-game for Barker is to physically construct part of the stick-people's world, a "Futureland (tm)" fantasy theme park. What could be a more natural desire for an artist who grew up in the California county of Disneyland, and who now lives a few blocks away from the Circus Circus and Silver Legacy casino-hotels in Reno? In the hands of someone like Barker, though, the idea of a theme park becomes much more than the conversion of individual disposable income into corporate profit. It's that Orwellian hall of mirrors where we lose ourselves in contemplation of consumption. If you examine one of

HOW TO STOP SMOKING AND BRING DOWN THE GOVERNMENT

by Phil Bond

It seems to me that these days, if you want to influence government policies, then the old ways are redundant. Write to your MP? Forget it. Organise a demo? Sure, if you want your head kicked in. Join a political party? Are you sick as well as stupid? There is not a lot that the 'average' person can do anymore; let's face it, climbing trees and digging tunnels won't stop the roads being built, and the short Scotsman in *The Great Escape* got shot dead for it (well, okay, he climbed a fence, not a tree, but he did dig a tunnel, and yes, I am well aware of the irony that the others escaped through the tunnel, but most of them got caught anyway, even Steve McQueen, so what chance do you have?).

Nowadays, to influence a government you have to set up your own party, and not just a party though, you have to have influence or money (preferably both) so as to get some maximum exposure for your causes. Arthur Scargill's got one, some anti-abortion bishop threatened to start one, and of course there is Sir James Goldsmith's Referendum Party, (who decided there should be a Referendum Party? No one asked me) All of these, amongst others, rattle their sabres at the doddering senile government that should put down like the rabid mongrel that it is, and of course at the avaricious eyes of the power hungry opposition, which should be put down like the rabid mongrel that it is, and that's how you get results (well, you didn't think voting did it, did you?).

If, like me, you are not an eccentric millionaire, and you don't have the power of God or a Trade Union behind you what can you do? I propose a radical new form of striking; a smoking strike. Think about it, governments are funded by taxation; they tax your earnings, add VAT and a whole lot of other charges for their 'services'. And what exactly do you get for your money? Fact-finding missions for Civil Servants and MP's, a badly run economy, failing health services, a welfare service that makes Scrooge look like Jimmy Saville, oh, and the chance to put a cross on a ballot box every five

years or so (forget about by-elections, I'm on a roll). So, they take huge chunks of money off you, and then spend it as wisely as Oliver Reed would if he'd just got back from a six month tour of Saudi Arabia and had just bumped into Peter O'Toole.

Anyway, I digress, to the crux of the argument. How to bring a government to its knees in one month (possibly) - give up smoking for a month, if your friends smoke, get them to stop too. And by the way, if you are a non-smoker, don't tune out; you can help by supporting your smoking friends in this endeavour, they'll need all the help they can get. I know this sounds a bit extreme, but hear me out. I'm a smoker myself, have no truck with these A.S.H. types (what the hell does 'have no truck' mean anyway? I don't even drive a car).

"Think about it, if you smoke 20 cigarettes a day, roughly £60 a month goes to the Government, so if one million of us gave up for a month..."

Think about it, if you smoke 20 cigarettes a day, roughly £60 a month goes to the Government, so if one million of us gave up for a month. Well that's £60,000,000 - or one royal yacht. So, the Queen wants a new boat huh? Not until we get some hospitals reopened (after all, we need them more than most people). Hell, throw in cheaper prescriptions and we'll get her a fucking space shuttle. Every time the government did something stupid, like erode civil liberties, sell arms to countries we're about to go to war with, or just hang around too long, we could threaten them with "everybody out", and just sit back and watch as the pound plummets. I mean every government knows the score on this one - they know it's bad for us, WE know it's bad for us, but THEY need the revenue more than the fags (I think).

A good way to cause them embarrassment during a strike would be to get together with a group of "striking" friends, choose one of their houses as a base, put a sign up outside - like churches do when they're begging for a new roof - showing how much revenue they've lost to date, for being a load of toss.

At this point I can hear you saying "but how can I last a whole month without a

drag?". Well, I won't pretend it'll be easy, but it can be done. You can cheat; as long as you don't BUY any fags during the strike (or indeed, buy extra before you give up; that would be self defeating, and would tip them off before hand). You could, for instance, prepare by saving a couple of fags from each pack you smoke, so at least you'll have some handy when the craving takes hold. Also you could go abroad and have a fag (although make sure you go to a country that treats it's smokers with some sympathy, and some taste). My preferred option would be to hang out with friends who smoke but don't give a shit about anything, then you could nick some of theirs. See, it can be done, all you need is willpower.

I guarantee that before long the powers that be will be shaking in their boots. However, be prepared for some dirty tricks. They will not give in to your demands immediately. First, they'll send some goons from the MOD to bug your house to find out what your favourite brand is. Then they'll sit outside and blow smoke rings through the windows and chuck empty cartons through the letterbox, just to wind you up. But stay calm, wait until you get the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the P.M. themselves at your door and when they've acceded to your every whim, send them out to get you a pack. MAKE THEM COUGH UP FOR A CHANGE.

COMING SOON: HOW TO END ALL WAR AND HUNGER WITH BEER. PB

BOB RED



BOB RED ON HIS ACTIVIST SISTER:

"She thought anyone who didn't want to join amnesty international should be rounded up and shot"

"TOP OF THE WORLD MA!"

Bill Drummond & Mark Manning go North



AFTER KLF, BILL DRUMMOND TEAMED UP WITH MARK MANNING TO PLACE AN ICON OF ELVIS PRESLEY AT THE NORTH POLE. WHY? "STING SAVED THE RAINFOREST, GELDOF SAVED AFRICA, I THOUGHT I'D SAVE THE WHOLE WORLD".

"I had just kamikazied my career in the music business, my life had crumbled around me...". So starts Bill Drummond, the man who started ZOO records, the man who fell out with Julian Cope, the man who kick-started the Liverpool scene, the man who was in The KLF, the man who left a dead sheep outside the Brits awards, the man who had that car, the man who Abba wouldn't let live, the man who spent so much money on a film which was never shown, the man who burned a million pounds, the man who ditched it all to go to the north pole, the north-fucking pole, to place an icon of Elvis Presley there that would send it's healing 'save-the-world' vibes around the world. Bill Drummond, the man who would save the world.

And there beside him, the most immaculately dressed man, black easy-suit with yellow dragons on,

sleeves not quite covering his tattooed arms, the man who was Zodiac Mindwarp, Zed, Mark Manning, the man who insanely fell for Drummonds plan, a charismatic Zen Master by default, a comedian with a delivery worthy of Bill Hicks, the man with the voice. Mark Manning. Zed. The Other Man who would save the world.

Bill Drummond and Mark Manning. The Eric Morecome and Ernie Wise of performance art. A double act of super-heroes.

Based on the book of the journey, Drummond and Manning have taken to the stage as virgins, no sound to back them up, just them and the story. And one of the only places they play which is an 'art' house, is here, Chapter Arts Centre in Cardiff. A sell out. "Most places we've played have been rock'n'roll sort of places" says Manning, tapping his Zen stick on the floor like a baron, although he admirably looks more like porn king. "It's nice to play a proper art venue". In conversation, they are as they are on stage, or maybe that should be the other way round. Drummond is intense in a relaxed sort of way, sometimes almost feverish. Manning is coarse, warm and funny. Both are indulgent conversationalists, both witty and amiable, although Drummond seems slightly more wary. Throughout the conversation, Drummond flips his Zen stick over in

his hands. He seems at times pre-occupied, steaming back into the conversation when the need occurs. He's oh-so-serious with Manning pulling rank and stealing the laughs. Both have a passion for what they do, and towards the end of the interview they keep getting caught up in their own conversations. *Bad Wisdom* the book is the first of a trilogy; the pair having recently returned from the second journey, up river *a la* Heart of Darkness in a Victorian boat.

Likewise: *Was there anything that you had read before you had set off that had influenced the writing that you did?*

Mark: Well that is a bit of a big question really, you're asking us about every book that we've ever read [laughs], they're all in there aren't they. Are there any influences that you particularly wish to talk about, is that what you are saying? What was the answer you were hoping for?

Likewise: *When reading your book it seems that you've read a lot of De Sade, there's a lot of scatological stuff in there.*

Mark: Well yeah, I like De Sade I think he's funny, the thing I like about De Sade is the humour, he's a very funny writer, I think he enjoys trying to make people as ill as possible. Burroughs' stuff is like

that, very humorous, especially with the my style of stuff, kind of like take the humour out of it and crank it up a volume.

Bill: And I've been reading I suppose the nature column in our local newspaper.

Likewise: *So you're coming to the end of the tour now, has it been how you expected?*

Mark: Yes it's been great, because we found out that we sold out and it's [Chapter] the best venue, because it's a proper arts venue. Obviously, Cardiff is the capital of Wales, so this is like the national theatre, which is a real blast. I was expecting some shitty fucking rock gig to be quite honest, and I'm pleasantly surprised.

Bill: We've been doing all sorts of things because what we are doing doesn't fit into any one genre or thing, people didn't know what to expect from us anyway, and we didn't know what to expect from ourselves when we found out that it had been booked up. So some places we go are totally a shitty rock gig, and they are hoping they'll make loads by sticking us on because of what our names meant when we were doing music, so we got a few gigs on the back of that.

Mark: Another thing is we're finding kids coming along expecting us to be this KLF/Mindwarp supergroup, and it's these two old blokes moaning, and other places are like draughty arts centres, who they haven't ever fucking heard of us.

Likewise: *So the intention on this tour has been to play more arts based centres rather than rock gigs?*

Bill: It has been all sorts of places.

Mark: Wherever we could get a gig basically.

Bill: It's just to go out there and try and evolve something, which we didn't really know what it was to begin with.

Likewise: *So you didn't have a set idea for the 'Psychotic Reality Show' at all.*

Bill: Well that was obviously quoting something you had read in 'Vox'

Mark: That was just some little joke we were bandying around on that day, and it got picked up, and -

Bill: -that sort of made it into 'this is what it is'

Mark: Well, no, we did actually work with Chris, who is doing a small piece tonight, cause we had no experience of working live without a bunch of musicians behind us, covering up the holes in our crapness. Like to go out there with just totally naked with a Zen stick and your charisma, its y'know just two blokes on stage with a couple of armchairs and a couple of

sticks, and a story to tell, I didn't know if we'd be able to pull it off without Cobalt behind me like playing guitar solos when I got tired. So the first four shows in New York covered the most nerve wracking experience I've had since I first went on stage with a band. But after them four I realised, it was easy, this is a piece of piss, why was I paying those musicians all these years.

Likewise: *So what was the main thing that prompted you to stop doing music and stuff, and get into doing literature and shows, rather than carry on with music and stuff?*

Mark: Well when you get to a certain age the leather trouser police come and take them off you. You obviously haven't reached that age yet. [motions to Andy] (Yes, our interviewer Andy, was wearing leather trousers. He has since been banned from wearing them again, ED) you'll be getting a knock soon, the leather kegs cops will be after you, you've got to hand them in.

Likewise: *This book is to be the first in a trilogy. Have you started work on the next one yet?*

Bill: We've done the journey, but we haven't started the second book yet.

Mark: We've done the journey, we've actually been to Zaire. We started all

hostage, by the militia or whatever, and that is the second book.

Likewise: *Have you had a good reaction to the book so far.*

Bill: I think mixed is the clichéd word.

Mark: We've got a good reaction from the performances, but I think you're talking about the book.

Bill: I think serious papers, I think they obviously approach it with suspicion, like you know any ex-pop/rock person is approached with suspicion, when they take those steps outside of the world that they are supposed to inhabit.

Mark: Its like when a singer makes a film, all the actors are very wary, same when an actor makes a record, we're always wary, fucking actors making records.

Bill: But it is only natural in that we would have both written it anyway, and it just so happened that we both got involved in music before we got involved in writing, but I'm sure, and that stands for the both of us, if we lived in a pre-rock and roll age, we would have both been down the pit really, we would have gravitated towards writing anyway.

Mark: Well we wouldn't have



Martin Appleton

that shit going, started all that bollocks rolling, well we like to think we did. No we went to Zaire and travelled from Kinchassa to Kisangarie and all the way through the journey there was this sort of, we couldn't quite put our finger on it, on what this air of impending doom was. And as soon as we got home the whole thing fucking exploded and we were very lucky to get out of there, if the boat had got stuck for a few more days on that river, the Zaire river, well you'd see us on the news there being held

actually because we wouldn't have been allowed to.

Bill: Nah, that's what I said, we'd be down the pit, well I'd have been down the steel works

Mark: Well I myself have always done paintings and drawings and shit and you know any old stuff to avoid getting a job. It just so happened that I lucked in with music, in the same way as Bill really, and we got to the end of that area.

Bill: You can't drag on your adolescence any more. You seem to be dragging it on a bit with your leather trousers [motions to Andy], but there is a point where you can't drag it on any more and you've just got to face the responsibilities of the rest of your life.

Likewise: *So why do you reckon you've endured so long as friends? You have known each other since the mid-eighties.*

Bill: Well it's not that long.

Mark: We don't see each other that much [laughs]

Likewise: *You've already been involved with publishing with your own curfew press. Why did the book come out through Penguin?*

Bill: Well the reason for that is that people felt that it demanded a wider audience than we could reach through Curfew Press.

Mark: Our first venture into publishing was prints which was a total disaster. We ended up making a book that had to cost five hundred quid, which was totally pornographic, which couldn't be sold in England.

Bill: We made it available to the general public, we said it had been stopped for pornography, stopped because stock Disney stuff was in it, nobody would print it so every page, every plate had to be hand done by a photographer so it cost a phenomenal amount.

Mark: And it was this big [makes large gestures with his hands to indicate that the volume may well be of atlas like proportions]

Bill: We've got a copy here, we decided at our last performance, last night or the night before that we would take it along and let people have a look at it in the bar afterwards.

Likewise: *Are you still running Curfew-press, or has it finished?*

Bill: Well hopefully there will be other things.

Likewise: *Are you going to put anybody else's work through it at all?*

Bill: Well there was this idea to begin with, but just doing what we are doing takes up all of our time, y'know actually writing, sitting down and writing a book, then writing the next book is gonna y'know...

Mark: To publish other peoples work we'd have to read it first, and we haven't got the time.

Bill: I think the trouble is we both get carried away with things too much, so with this other book, bits of it had to be fantastic, and it's hard for us to let go of things. We were going round looking at paper places, and studying paper and things. The fact that it is a Penguin paperback it's just whatever

Mark: The greatest book we've got though is in the Tower, it's this huge

thing that is bound in reindeer skin, which is this big, but it wasn't just this, it's two hundred years old and dredged from the bottom of the north Atlantic.

Bill: From some ship that was coming from Finland with reindeer hides to go to Italy, and it sank off the whatever coast, and this was going to be for this Bad Wisdom, and we were going to have one copy.

Mark: Hand written

Bill: Hand write it, that sounds just self indulgent.

Mark: So there is this massive reindeer bound book in the Curfew Tower with nothing in it.

Bill: And in reality what it looks like, and this is something you observed [motions to Mark], is that it just looks like a wallpaper catalogue.

Mark: The most expensive wallpaper catalogue in the world.

"We're finding kids coming along expecting us to be this KLF/Mindwarp supergroup, and it's these two old blokes moaning..."

Mark Manning

Likewise: *If you had to choose a couple of books that you particularly liked, that meant something to you.*

Bill: A desert island book? If I was only taking two books, one would be the Bible, and one would be, I don't know what the other one would be.

Mark: Well I'd probably end up on the same island as him so I wouldn't select the Bible.

Bill: We can share the Bible between us

Mark: I always find that I can go back to 'Dorian Gray' for some weird reason, I don't know why, I just like it.

Likewise: *I like the Oscar Wilde scene in Bad Wisdom, with this fat old queen farting everywhere. Where does this obsession with farts that runs throughout the book come from?*

Mark: All three of us are phenomenal farters.

Bill: And It's a reflection of the reality that we were going through

Mark: Three blokes in a small car travelling eighteen hour journeys, and its like too cold to open the windows, and the heater is on, so these farts become mega and you can't open the windows, so obviously they are there all the time.

Likewise: *Reading it, it seems like a 'Fear and Loathing' in the arctic wastes*

Mark: I haven't read that since I was about fourteen. It's probably because I've fried my brain with drugs and he probably has as well, so obviously we see things in a particular way, all the experiences that you've had on drugs

do tend to colour the nature of your perception of reality somewhat.

Bill: That sort of thing was there when we were teenagers, but its not something that I have read.

Likewise: *Were there any problems with getting 'Bad Wisdom' published?*

Bill: We sent out a proof copy to Penguin on a Friday, and they got back to us on the Monday saying we want to publish this. There were, as it turned out, a few things that they wanted to tone down.

Mark: Mainly it was the ages of the girls in my writing, I had to make them middle aged, because a majority of them were six year olds and stuff, just stuff that's funny, which made it even more unreal. But then there is the problem with that at the moment, which is fair enough.

Bill: From the libel point, one of the things in my part the initial barrister picked up on, was when I said I'd rather be doing blah, blah, blah than taking lines of coke with Andy and the Velvet Underground circa '66, and they picked us and said you can't say that. The reason being you say Andy was taking coke because he's dead, but you can't say the Velvet Underground because Mo Tucker might come back and say "I never took drugs", you can say Andy and Lou, but not anything else.

Mark: It's well documented his drugs thing.

Bill: Its the things like that which you never even think about.

Likewise: *So you won't get any problems from Keith Richards then?*

Bill: In actual fact the second barrister, it didn't matter about all that, but the first geezer, picked us up on all little things like that. I think he was just trying to prove how he knew all the reference points, more than he was just trying to show that he was a good barrister.

Likewise: *The greatest surprise is that it has been put through a major publishing house, where usually this material would go through a smaller organisation.*

Bill: Stuart Home, who's quoted on the back [of Bad Wisdom], told us that he reckoned that there was no way his publishers would have allowed that book to go out. If we'd written it and presented it to them they would have been shit scared because of what could legally happen to them could have put them out of business. So maybe in one sense, having a major company behind you...

Mark: Plus Penguin really believed in it, believed it was literature, he didn't think it was a scurrilous piece

of filth, he thought it had literary quality.

Bill: They thought long and hard within the company, although the decision was made straight away, but-obviously some other people within Penguin saw it at face value.

Likewise: *Many people would perceive Penguin to be a bit of a conservative publisher.*

Mark: Well that is what Hugh was trying to, he was a little bit unhappy with the way that Penguin were seeming to become safe, originally they were at the forefront, with 'Lady Chatterly's [Lover]', they were actually pushing, spreading the boundaries, and I think he feels that Penguin should carry on doing that. We were the lambs to be slaughtered.

Bill: I don't think even they know, they don't know until all the annual accounts and returns. Bookshops will be ordering it up on the back of who we are initially, and it will take a while for it to actually have its own life, beyond our own set of personal histories.

Mark: The thing I didn't like to mention, was that a majority of my fans when I was in a band couldn't read.

Likewise: *I did see you live a couple of times.*

Mark: Come out burning the pension books.

Likewise: *Talking of burning.... Any regrets about the burning of the million quid?*

Bill: [Drummond gets up, like we committed the cardinal sin] Stop, stop, the interviews over [laughs, sitting back down]. After you've done something like that where do you go? Best thing is to call a moratorium and get on with your life basically.

Mark: It was after I'd burnt a fiver that it pissed him off, and the fact that I never told anybody.

Likewise: *So what will be happening when this tour is finished?*

Mark: Its back to the garret I'm afraid

Bill: Sharpen our quills

Mark: As neither of us has quite got to grips with this computer technology, we'll be sharpening our pencils and that's why it takes so long.

Bill: Are the British Museum going to have printouts?

Together: Nah

The performance is mesmerising, particularly Mannings frighteningly good monologues, both extreme and funny. He's remarkably literate, a genuine talent and has a delivery full of mimicry and confidence. Any nerves he mentioned at the start of the tour have

mythical Gimpo, sex, Keith Richards stuck in Helsinki unable to leave the bar, a deliriously driven Escort, Viking bikers and a battle of almost biblical proportions with Madonna. Of course, much of Mannings story is fantasy, with Drummond giving a somewhat more realistic interpretation of events. But it's this constant switching between the two that sets the whole performance off like a catherine wheel. You could go to a gig and not be as entertained as this. The story starts with Drummond explaining his intention to place an icon of Elvis Presley at the north pole, the top of the world, so that it's good vibes permeate down throughout the world. The pair set off with what can only be described as the most insane lack of planning (head for Helsinki, hire car, drive north) and what follows is a travelogue both unique and riveting. At times the pair read from manuscript, but for the most part they relate their experiences as if they were the life and soul of the party.

What comes across more than any particular event, more than any 'stunt', more than any objective, is the passion the two have for just the idea as an ideal, that the idea and it's execution is all that is required. Maybe most people don't actually get where Drummond's coming from, maybe they think he's a prankster, a hoaxer, a rebel without a clue. They're all wrong. Drummond comes from nowhere other than himself. He doesn't give a shit about what people think, he just has an impulsive need to exorcise each idea by making them real. It's an admirable trait. As we leave, the two hit the dressing rooms again, Zen-sticks on shoulders. Few people look at them go, and even if they did the pair wouldn't notice. They're too busy still talking.

WIN!

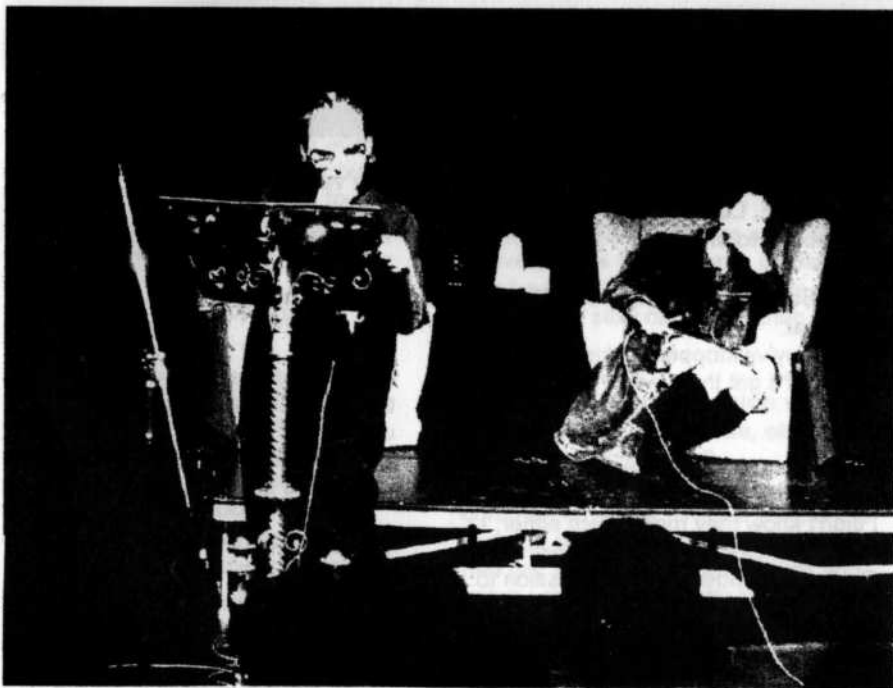
BAD WISDOM!

Those excellent people at Penguin have nicely given us 5 copies of the book, and it really is worth reading. Just how controversial is it? Win one and find out for yourself.

JUST ANSWER THIS ONE SIMPLE QUESTION:

What car did the duo use to get to the North Pole? (And yes, the answer's in the interview...)

As a tie-breaker: **What would you take to the North Pole to save the world?** Answers to Likewise.



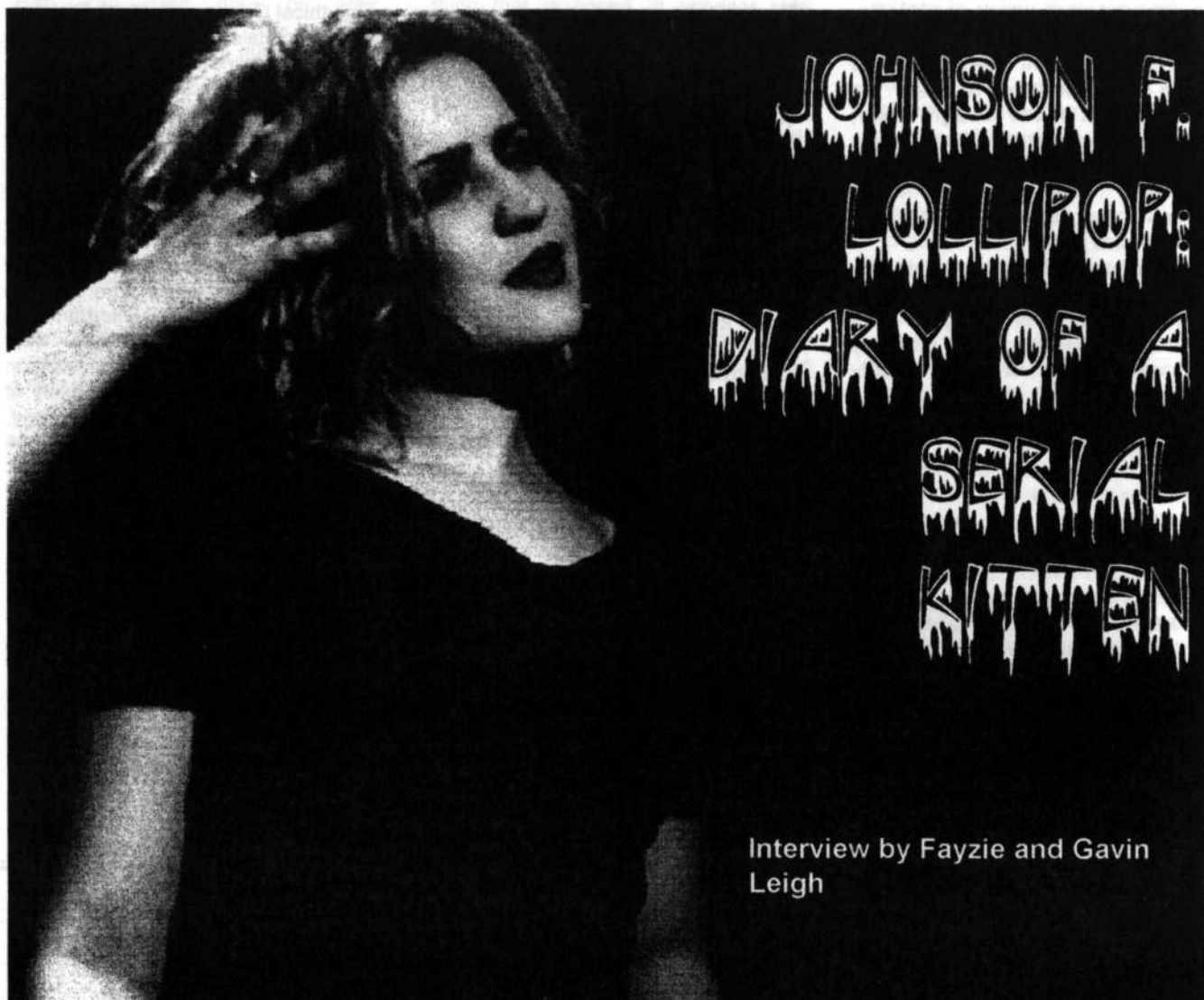
Martin Appleton

Mark: You know what I'm talking about then.

Likewise: *Has the K-foundation finished then?*

Bill: Yeah, Jimmy and I signed a contract, a twenty three year moratorium, and I will be sixty two when the moratorium is up, so we'll be back in a blaze of glory when I get to sixty-two.

definitely disappeared. Drummond, replete with kilt and long leather coat, shows much the same confidence, quietly smiling to himself at Mannings dialogue. His own delivery, while at odds with Mannings, is equally dramatic. The performance comes in two 30-minute shifts, with both halves zipping past. It's a wild story encompassing The Laps, Chippendales, Vodka, the almost



Interview by Fayzie and Gavin Leigh

Johnson F Lollipop released her interesting Fag-Ash Golgotha, a collection of her poetry, in early 1995. It was a strange collection, a weird mixture of vaguely 'punk-rock' half-meaning it poems, full of some great imagery, but often bogged down in the need to 'mean it'. But in a couple of them, notably "The Ultimate Agency" and "Me, The Easy Score", there seemed to be another influence trying to break through, something inspirational, not yet knowing who it was, but just learning to walk. Just over a year later and the transformation is remarkable. She looks different, she talks different. And her work is, to put it mildly, unbelievable. There quite literally has not been a poet/artist like her. This is groundbreaking stuff, material that could quite conceivably put her somewhere no poet has been before. You can forget what you know of poetry, you can forget whether you even like it or not. This is different. With her new book "Paralysed by

Headlights" due out in mid summer, Johnson F. Lollipop looks like she is just about to arrive.

Yves Saint Laurent cigarettes? Unusual.

Well, they've stopped making them, so I thought I'd get them while they're still around.

I didn't even know they made cigarettes.

I didn't know they made them either, I usually smoke either Chesterfields or Gauloise Blondes. I'm on a mission to smoke every brand on the market. I can tell the difference now between a good cigarette and a bad one.

So which is the best smoke, all round?

Chesterfields, but they give me a headache if I smoke too many of them.

You sound from your poetry like you smoke all the time, like you love it.
I do. I like looking at the packaging. And I like buying things.

You've been making up your own brand cigarette boxes.

Yes, "Scorpion brand Smokes". They each come in a unique pack. There's a leather one, a snakeskin one, papyrus

one, there's even one with a pack that looks like some tarty underwear. Each with the Scorpion logo on them. "The cigarette with the sting in it's tail".

You use a lot of fifties imagery and feel, but in a very nineties way. What's the attraction?

Too many David Lynch films. But looking back to the fifties, it was so naïve, and the nineties is such a cynical time. And I look at the fifties because the women's figures were so different then.

Voluptuous?

Yeah, the nineties figure lacks the sensuality. As Hugh Hefner said, it was the 'girl next door who's interested in sex' look. Also, it seems you can't shock now, the fifties still had some taboos to cover.

Interestingly, though, some of your stuff is actually quite shocking. For instance the Jane Russell/Marilyn Monroe lesbian stuff. It's like throwing them into the nineties.

Well that's what it is. It's taking some fifties stuff and putting it here. And playing with it. Glamour, movies. I read this essay in a Sunday newspaper by this gay journalist looking back at Hollywood in the fifties, and he was saying that there was loads of homosexual undertones



Gavin Leigh

in many films, and Marilyn Monroe was supposedly not averse to women anyway. We know all this now, but at the time it was all a big secret to most people. That piece was after reading that essay, you take something like that and let it drift off into a fantasy land. And it was an actual dream I had.

A large part of your book is made up of these little encapsulated dream recollections. They get quite carnal, and they really are often very bizarre. Do you really dream these or make them up? I don't think I'd have the conscious imagination to make some of those up. They're just a product of an unsettled mind. Makes me happy, anyway. I'm always surprised by them.

They're certainly interesting. I like the Mulder and Scully ones. I like the way that anything goes, that anything can get a mention at any time. From ancient mythology to TV mythology.

Well seeing as I'm a single girl, I watch a lot of TV. Jerry Springer, X-Files, loads of stuff. They're bound to

get in there somewhere. If I have a problem it's like Mulder and Scully are investigating it in my subconscious. They've got their torches in there. And Frank Black's looking to catch the bad man.

What's the book going to look like?
It's like a really cool music video on the page. Images, words, shit that swings. A real coffee table affair.

The sexuality that runs through a lot of what you do, from the packaging

stuff, right through to the writing and poetry, is interesting. It neither excuses itself, nor is it indulgent, it just seems to be there.

To me most things can be sexy, like conversations can be sexy, smoking can be sexy, just existing can be sexy. Sometimes sexy can be better than sex itself.

What about your obsession with boxes? Cigarette cartons, etc. Where does that come from?

I've always loved packaging, not in a commercial sense. There's a picture of me as a baby with a present my mother had just given me. It was a brush and comb set, and apparently I tossed away the brush and comb, and I was just sat there playing with this thing, with this little cellophane window. It's become a kind of fetish thing. There's that whole Pandora's box thing too. You don't know what you're going to find. Like in Angel Heart, where Mickey Rourke is looking at all the pretty boxes on Charlotte Rampling's dressing table, and he finds a mummified hand in one of them.

Your packaging work is very tactile, you need to stroke it.

Well it's the idea of making packaging sensual. There's certain things like rubber, fur, leopard print, snakeskin. They just feel sensual. I'd like to make a snakeskin car. Or a snakeskin TV.

Where would you like to be in 10 years time?

I'd like to be sat in the back of a big limousine. Doing all the things I've written about.

JOHNSON F. LOLLIPOP'S TEN FAVOURITE BOOKS:

1. *Western Lands* by William Burroughs

"A book beyond books, the book I'll go to when I die"

2. *Place of Dead Roads* by William Burroughs

"Evilly funny, nicotine-stained dreams. Poignancy with a heartfelt leer"

3. *Crash* by J. G. Ballard

"This'll scar the most wholesome fantasy lives forever. Please let me see the film, please let me see the film"

4. *The Last Museum* by Brion Gyson

"Incongruous and kinky. A huge influence."

5. *Story of the Eye* by Battielle

"Bizarrely erotic. You'll never look an egg in the eye again."

6. *Safe Sex* by William Edgar Boggan

"My most favourite of recent novels"

7. *Goddess: The Secret Lives of Marilyn Monroe* by Anthony Summers

"This'll make you feel like you've met the lady, been her friend, lover and worst enemy, and it's got to be the best conspiracy plot ever"

8. *Wise Blood* by Flannery O'Connor

"Macabre fun. Think of Harry Dean Stanton with a bible"

9. *Burning in Water Drowning in Flame* by Charles Bukowski

"I like my poetry to have boozy, just woken up breath"

10. *Pimp* by Iceburg Slim

"Supremely cool, cinematic dialogue, rapped in a disturbingly funky amoral world"

JOHNSON F. LOLLIPOP

Previews from the forthcoming book
"Paralysed By Headlights: Diary of a
Serial Kitten"

I Aint Got No Bodies

I've been getting strange calls
from people that do things to you
masturbating to shadows
with ember-red cheeks

It's rainy and I'm getting shiny
as plastic

I've been recieving strange calls
I'm sensitive to danger
with time to spare for the square
I'm spiritless by early nightfall

And I aint got no bodies

I've been recieving strange messages
from photocopies of hands
all gleaming with lubricant
playing cards with my existence

It's rainy and I'm shiny as plastic
And I aint got no bodies
tonight
like they think I have

Look up to the skies
those clouds are shaped like parted thighs
it's raining bodies through the shiny
windscreen of your eyes
extending into the evening starlight beyond.

a body below the waist.
Being without legs.
"He looks like a bird".
rise from the
He was born with
He Was born inside
looking for
in the dark.
THIS GLOVE
Johnny Eck. born
below the
is now a
Being
legs.
on his glove.
the clues all say
from hospital games.
with waste in his
born inside a glove
for Nurses in the dark.
Johnny Eck. without
is now a Private Detective.
he walks on his hands.
the fingers all say as he
hospital flames.
smoke in his lungs.
a glove compartment
clues
JOHNNY ECK IS IN
COMPARTMENT.
without a body
smoke.
Private Detective.
without
he walks
"He looks like a bird".
as he rises
He was born
lungs. He was
compartment looking

Black & white. Soft-focus. There are trees billowing in a soundless storm. The wind smudges the sky grey and black and blacker.

Close-up of Marilyn Monroes troubled and tender face.

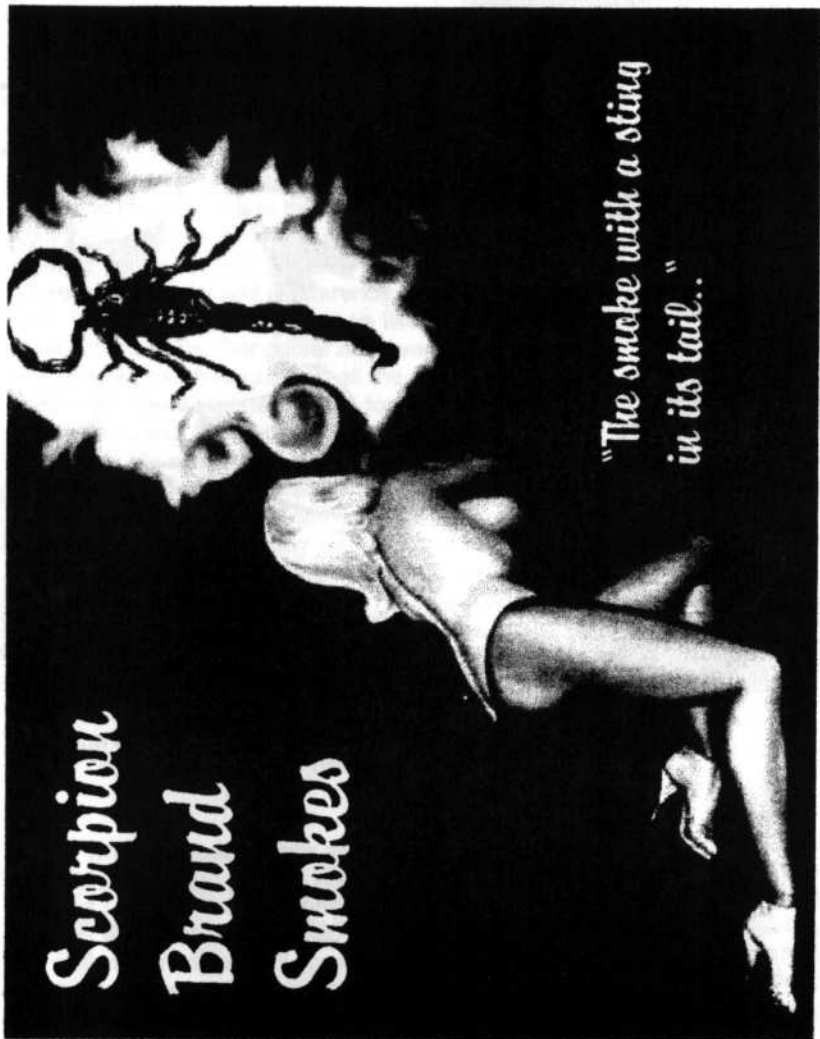
Pan to Jane Russell, epicurean and carnal in curves, stepping closer to a nearly nude Marilyn until she is brushing her sequined bodice up against her.

Marilyn is trembling as she allows herself one long, sweet kiss. Jane, then moving her lips to Marilyn's ear, whispers something low and raspy making M terrified, looking like she wants to bolt towards the trees. But she finds herself submitting to Jane's finger's, which are gently working their way into her ass, and up into her deepest part.

Dream sequence
from "Paralysed
by Headlights"

Mulder's evil doppelganger is fucking some lady who's hanging from a storage room ceiling by hooks. He behaves in a very sensuous but unwholesome way.

Scorpion Brand Smokes



Design for advertisement
for "Scorpion Brand Smokes",
Johnson's imaginary brand
of cigarette.

TELEPHONE

MESSAGE FOR
IN YOUR ABSENCE A CALL WAS RECEIVED
FROM TIME

ACTION

what time is it?
IT'S PARTY O'CLOCK
what time is it?
IT'S SEXY O'CLOCK
what time is it?
IT'S SATAN O'CLOCK
what time is it?
IT'S JOHNSON T. LULLPOP O'CLOCK

MESSAGE
TAKEN BY y.d.c. 128888-888888-DATE



by Mervyn James

Who can know the geography of the velvet prison? No tangible cages exist, no iron bars, and the keepers are faceless and often invisible. Yet a prison is still a prison, and my sentence is inevitably life, and solitary confining too. There are hearing-guides, but their direction is aimless, singular, and circular in design and intent, and the velvet prison a shapeless, formless maze, and we prisoners are often lost, and that seems to be part of some grand design, to disorientate and confuse.

I enter the door, which prophetically slams shut silently behind me, and became faced with such deprivation of contact and an almost total incomprehension of the spoken word, that I feel dead, without even the dignity of a funeral, or having lived first.

The warder mouthed a phrase that could never be understood, except those who have goldfish or mummings for relatives. I nod assent in utter and total incomprehensibility. My footsteps drag silently through the darkened corridors, each once-familiar door of sound and comfort closing deathlessly behind me, as I go deeper and deeper. I stop and am faced with a long, stone table.

"Empty your pockets of awareness please," a Keeper says, "you can have them back when you leave", which is accompanied by long, sustained and hysterical laughter, but the punch line escapes me totally. One by one, each knowing smile, each friendly word, each sigh of satisfaction, the bird songs, the silly tunes that once buzzed around my head, "The Esso sign means.....", and cherished, whispered endearments of a loved one, memory after memory after memory, I empty onto the bare altar of their prejudice, each falling, and adding to a

crumpled, messy and untidy heap, this is then bagged, to be consigned to the dustbin of yesterday, they know I can never leave. "Sign here," he intones, each word akin to a

threat, and accompanied by a snarl, "and here and here." I struggle, I shout "I'm a man, I want to live, I don't understand".

They laugh, and he shouts silently, they force my hand down onto the pen, until my hand is penetrated, my blood blotting out my persona, and I scream in pain. I am moved wearily on, down corridors of screaming skulls, through mirrored doors, each looking the same. The chains around my head and neck, now weigh heavier, and heavier, and each knowing smile and pitying look adds to the weight, until I fall to my knees almost unable to go on. I am dragged to my feet, more doors, more corridors. A door, a gesture, I enter a cell, and fall to the floor of my tomb of silence.

Sleep? But I am not alone. A fearsome creature with animated limbs and a fearsome countenance emerges into the half gloom, it talks, and stalks me, but he has no voice, he is frantically waving and pointing at me, what terror is this? His face contorts, and his gestures become a whirling maelstrom of silent speech, I sit, desolate and uncomprehending on a bare bed, its dirty, rusty coiled springs, totally without any semblance of comfort, a rotting, dirty sheet lies on the floor, and I am in utter despair. The thing eventually stops, I think it is a man, but never have I seen his like before, nor wish again. He is angry, he turns away in disgust and shuffles back into a dark corner, I look again and I am alone, I no longer care. I am tired, I try to sleep, but the noises, the whistles, the bells, the throb, throb, throbbing in my head, and the drones will not leave me be. Silence, silence! Silence? Oh if only that was possible. The room spins, finally, and exhausted, I fall into a fitful, desperate and exhausted grey sleep.

I dream in sound, my nightmares are opera, I awake in tears. The dawn assails my eyes. The terror remains, my isolation now complete. I shake, I sweat, but it isn't the cold or the countless scurrying rats, that had been gnawing at my unfeeling legs.

I crawl to the window with its legal and gaily decorated bars and stare, out onto a white-flaked greying wall of indifference, which obliterates everything of meaning.

The door opens, a man enters, a hand, or is it a claw? Touches my shoulder... I turn, fearfully, a grey uniform and a grey featureless face imitates sympathy, he fails, he is my captor.

Others are there, and we are led 2 by 2 for breakfast, like refugees to the Ark, except this Ark is no sanctuary, neither is it waterproof, god-inspired it isn't. Each of us is accompanied by our own personal apocalyptic guides, gesture, ridicule, pity and indifference, our four soul mates, who attach themselves to us like leeches, sucking the very life from us. Our gaoler and overseer is warden well-meaning, much worse than all the others combined, since his form and manner remain forever undefined, his help enchains me, his pity disables me, his support cripples me, his indifference determines and lengthens my sentence. His face turns toward me, but I cower, trembling in terror, face to the floor, afraid to look, they grab my head and force me to face my captor..., the blood drains from my face, horror upon unspeakable horror! It is too much, I collapse and fall to the floor, my sight now useless, his face.... it was mine.

Mervyn James

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By Steve Jeanes

At night my body lights up like a nest of fireflies. I lie back, naked, and watch their progress around my veins and nervous system. Purposeful, but indirect. Powerful, but insubstantial. They go about their business oblivious to me. Sometimes gathering together in single-coloured groups, like grid-iron huddles. Other times, forsaking their kin, and wandering alone on the minor routes, briefly twirling round one another as they pass.

I'M FOREVER BLOWING BUBBLES

There was a time when the sight of my own naked body immediately made me think of sex. Now, it's as though I am pregnant with a million about to be born infants, and I think only of birth. And rebirth. I am to be the mother of a race. My whole body is a womb. My mind is a god awaiting worship.

I sleep little, and when I do, my dreams swirl and twist and erupt with the lights. They warm me, they freeze me, they stroke me with the chill knife of blindness, they grip me with the sharp claws of madness. They play with me because they are learning. And I am a benevolent god. There are a million different games that they like to play. Some push me to ecstasy. I experience the whole breadth of my godhood. I touch the farthest stars. I feel the love of the universe, swell out from my centre and engulf eternity. Others take me the other route, where oblivion beckons, and where I am forced to confront the exquisite enormity of my own fear.

There are times when, always after this last kind of sleep, I awake to find them in frenzy. All together, twisting in crazed spirals to the sound of some unheard rhythm. They leap, they dance, they build to a climax. The smell of burning pervades the air. My body stretches and distorts to accommodate them, jerking to their rhythm. My sweat lubricates them and excites them further. My mind, fresh from the horrors of the

dreaming god, opens and shuts like a clam. Blood thunders. Eyeballs throb. Toes clutch for invisible branches. Anus seals like a diving submarine. The crescendo builds to ecstatic horror. I am beauty. I am death. I watch myself leave, I see myself stay, I ride the wave between myself and myself. I am driven in so many directions that eventually the cool eternity of blackness is inevitable. I plunge in, and surface in the cold wet mortality of dawn. I am emptiness in a skin. Dark corners with cobwebs and

hissing wind. A dry rasp of shallow breathing and the sting of staring eyes.

It was worst in Haiti. After a really bad night, I need to move. Like a hung over lover who knows that a big mistake has been made, I can't wait to leave. And the further the better. The lights retire to wherever they go in daylight, and I fly to the four corners of the world. There's a feeling of having done my work, having produced an offspring, a god-child, and a need to start afresh elsewhere.

It began in Israel. In a shocking night of ecstasy, I became fecund with my burden, discharged it, and immediately began my travels. Since then I have been everywhere. Through the Mediterranean countries, and north. West to the Atlantic. I was very bright in London. Through the Americas and into the Pacific basin. Wild and tearful in China. Frenzied in India. Overwhelmed back in eternal Africa.

But it was worst in Haiti.

As time has passed a kind of rhythm has formed. I've come to be prepared for the nights when activity is high, and almost welcome them like the return of a lover. Rolling together in my cocoon of moving lights. Free with the heat of passion. Driven by the needs of desire. And with the

culmination of our creative dance, the sweet release of travel and the time to relax.

That was until Haiti.

Haiti was more like a rape. A rape that has never stopped. There are lulls, but there is never peace, and the lulls are getting shorter.

My travels are now more like running away. The lights no longer leave me completely in daytime, and at night the activity is unprecedented, frantic, exhausting. I black out often, but never rest. I feel that a dam has burst, and I am constantly giving birth, and still constantly gestating.

I ran from Haiti to New York. Tried to hide from the world and myself in the dark other world of the night people, where my blackouts didn't seem out of place. I almost welcomed the mortal danger of muggers and hoodlums, though they

left me alone. In my moments of weakness, and disorientation, I was cared for by those that society cared little for themselves, the gays and the junkies. Though I was beyond even their comprehension when caught in the throes of god-birthing.

From there, finally returning to the West of Africa, always Africa. This time to purify myself with the burning sun. To lay open the wound before its endless cauterising rays. To be sterilised.

But the light only feeds the lights. I have no strength left to fight. I live under canvas on the beach, and the local people have learnt to stay away. Sometimes I hear them chanting from across the dunes. The last barrier against the raging spirits.

Over the centuries I have been the source of so much dismay. Isolated incidents at first, but growing in scope and complexity as time passed, and as the challenge was met. But now there is no protection. I question faster than

answers can be found. The soldiers have lost forever to the hunchbacks. I am creating a masterpiece.

This is the end. The lights never stop. They have been joined by a noise, a humming, cracking sound. The sound of the wind on frozen eyes. I can no longer focus on my own outline as the climax nears. The whole world is throbbing with heat and light and, most of all, expectancy. It's happening. The pod is bursting. I gasp my final breaths of joy and despair as my offspring rush out to their destiny.

I feel no guilt. I am an unchoosing vessel, and cannot help the pride and possessiveness of creation. You have lived for generations with, and learnt somehow to survive the icy stare of the horsemen, but now I give you an end. Now I give you the taste of the spore of the Beast.

BE PART OF IT.....WRITE SOMETHING.

LIKEWISE FAVOURITISM!!

Now what the hell is a promotion for a mechanic doing in Likewise Magazine? I mean this is about writing! Well this is the guy who keeps us mobile, the guy who never rips us off, and the man is a complete craftsman. If this man was a writer he'd be a poet. And he's done us so many favours that we wanted to do something back. And that's why this is here.

If you need to get your wheels fixed, take our word for it, and see the guy we see. Don't go to the TV advertised garages. And he gives discount if you're a student. And he's damn good.

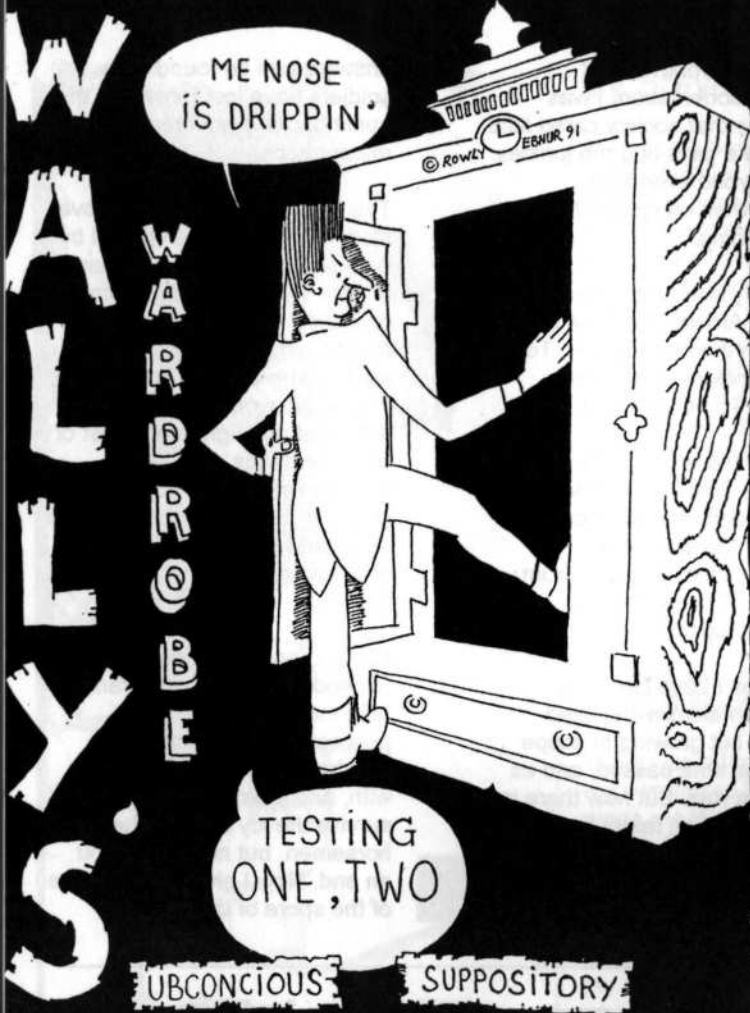
The poet of mechanics.

Ask for John at Dragonwheels.

West Canal Wharf CARDIFF

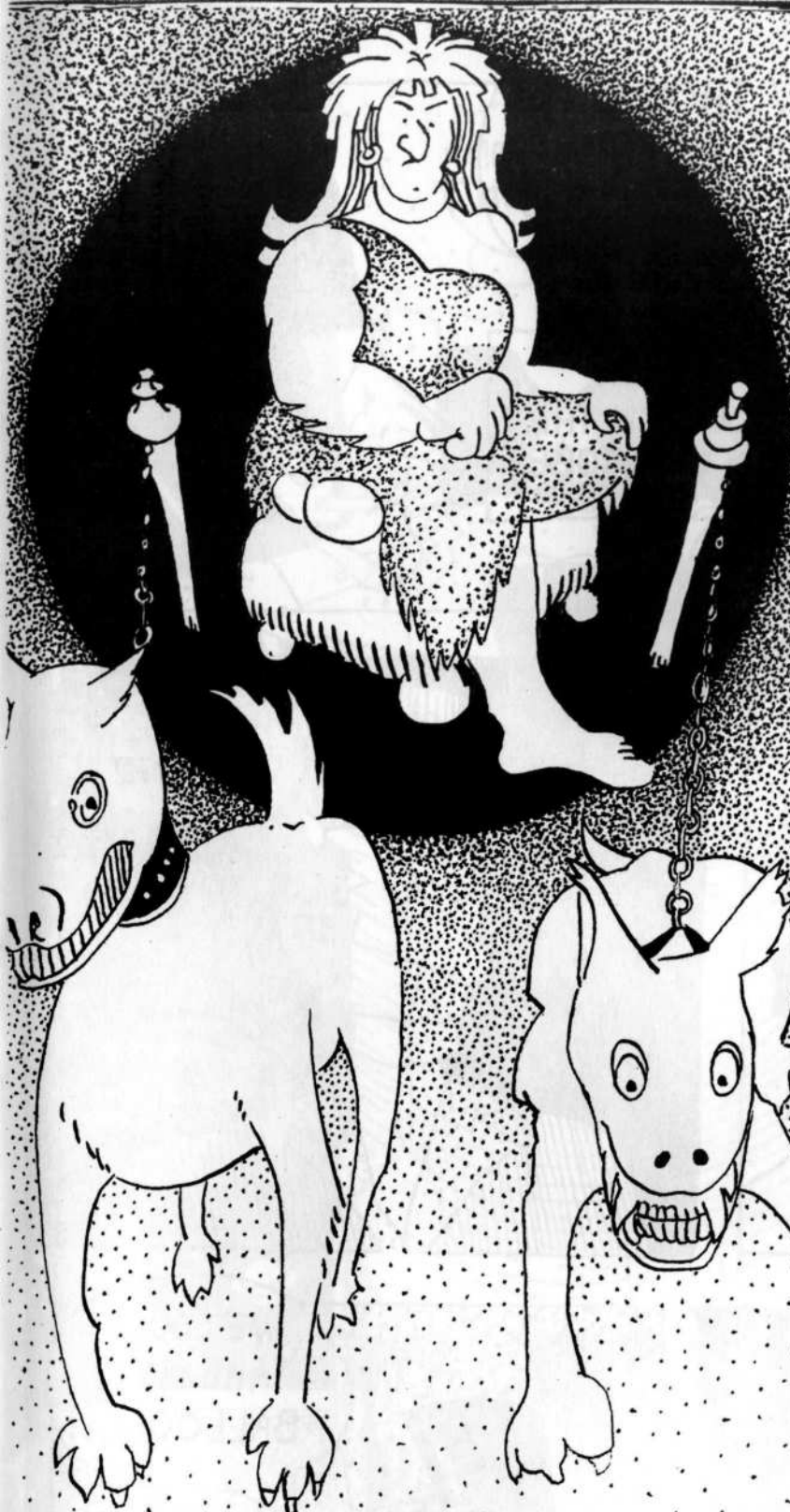
(Go under the bridge, turn left and through the gates)

Tell him we sent you.



After an accident at a nuclear processing plant near his home, Wally found that he could travel through space and time merely by entering his Wardrobe





I CAME INTO MY
WARDROBE LOOKING
FOR MY SHIRT

NOT REALLY
HAPPENING

THIS IS







MORE BALLAST
MORRIGAN

EVERYTHING WAS
BAD IN MY
CANTREF 'TIL MY
SON KILLYRIC
FORMED A BAND
NOW THERE'S ROCK
FANS ASSEMBLED

BLACKDAWN ENTERPRISES

THE WORDS OF CHRISTOPHER STOLLE

IDEAL

dark clouds snap and buckle!
here I lay, under the rainbow,
listening to your heart beat;
I cannot hold you, cannot touch.
I sense your face in my mind,
but it's hazy with this mist;
I wonder what bed you will make
when you arise tomorrow afternoon.
she forsake me, turned the last cheek;
I knew her name as well as I knew
when it was time to harvest, time to plough.
dream winds slip through the borders;
she snaked her hands into my jeans
to find her fingers were as soft as silk,
but then I awoke to my heart racing.
I peered into my mirror, to part my hair,
because she liked it when I was free prey.
I liked it when she was here, in this tense,
but I haven't seen her outside my persona
because I won't let my alter ego drive.

BROTHERS IN DESPAIR (To Fyodor Dostoyevsky)

Splitting images became war veterans during 1917 A.D.
when walking through Childrens Court in downtown
Moscow.

I notice the beggars reaching for crumbs thrown to the
birds;
looking out across the harvested plains, I see the crows
mate
like when I see the children playing their games in the
streets;
everything is furious, rythmatic, special, even in tradition.

Supper time in the old village reminds me of my
grandfather;

he was a twisted and evil blacksmith who pitied the
poverty vermin.

Sometimes he would brandish boots for soldiers living at
the dock,

but he never caught a fish when he felt he was blessed
with friends;

we would sit around the home fire, hoping to peel back
the scales,

but all we ever did was peel those filthy potatoes from
Ireland.

I turn my sights toward the picturesque red barons on the
steps

leading to the Kremlin, but they were nothing more than
warriors;

their Marxist ways and their Lenin shadows erase all
hopes for unity;

I am a quirk in the system they wish to use to drown my
universe,

but my moment of reverence comes when I read my
uncle's words:

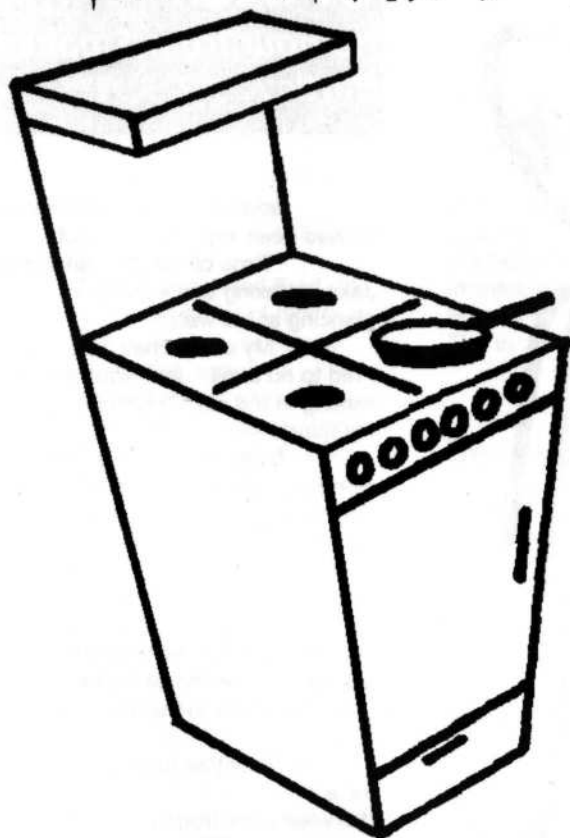
"Sleep with waking eyes to tell the grandchildren what
dreams

look like when it's shifted to the left or right by optical
illusions."

I don't think anyone I know can have faith in dreams
anymore;

we must keep hoping each thought in our head is our
reality.

THE WORDS OF TÔPHUR MILLS



DISASTER OIL SLICK REACHES SKOMER

I don't know what the weather is like
as the pancake flips in the wok.
It was snowing earlier but it stopped
and I'd stood looking at the outside world
with nothing much to comment on.
And now the oil is burning;
virginal oil stuff my parents
bring home from espana.
I pour the whisked packet mixture
and wait till it's cooked enough to play with,
tossing it high and catching it flat.
I don't burn any. Two eggs proves ace.
I play 'Pulp' and scoff the lot
with sugar and lemon juice from a bottle,
traditional and unwavering in my greed.
The weather is like, what? I don't know.

**SAT IN WYNDHAM ROAD LISTENING
TO SHOSTAKOVITCH'S 2ND
QUARTET ON THE CAR RADIO IN
JULY BECAUSE ELISABETH WAS
OUT.**

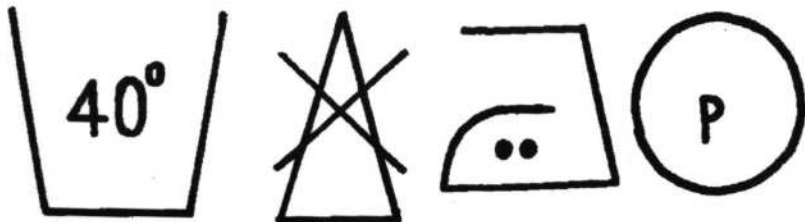
That arc
to the small pile
of abandoned detritus
has dried a pale streak
to red mud
on warm tarmac
and the sun
has just gone in
again
as two old ladies
in coats and hats
walk by
accompanying the pavement
to the rapturous applause

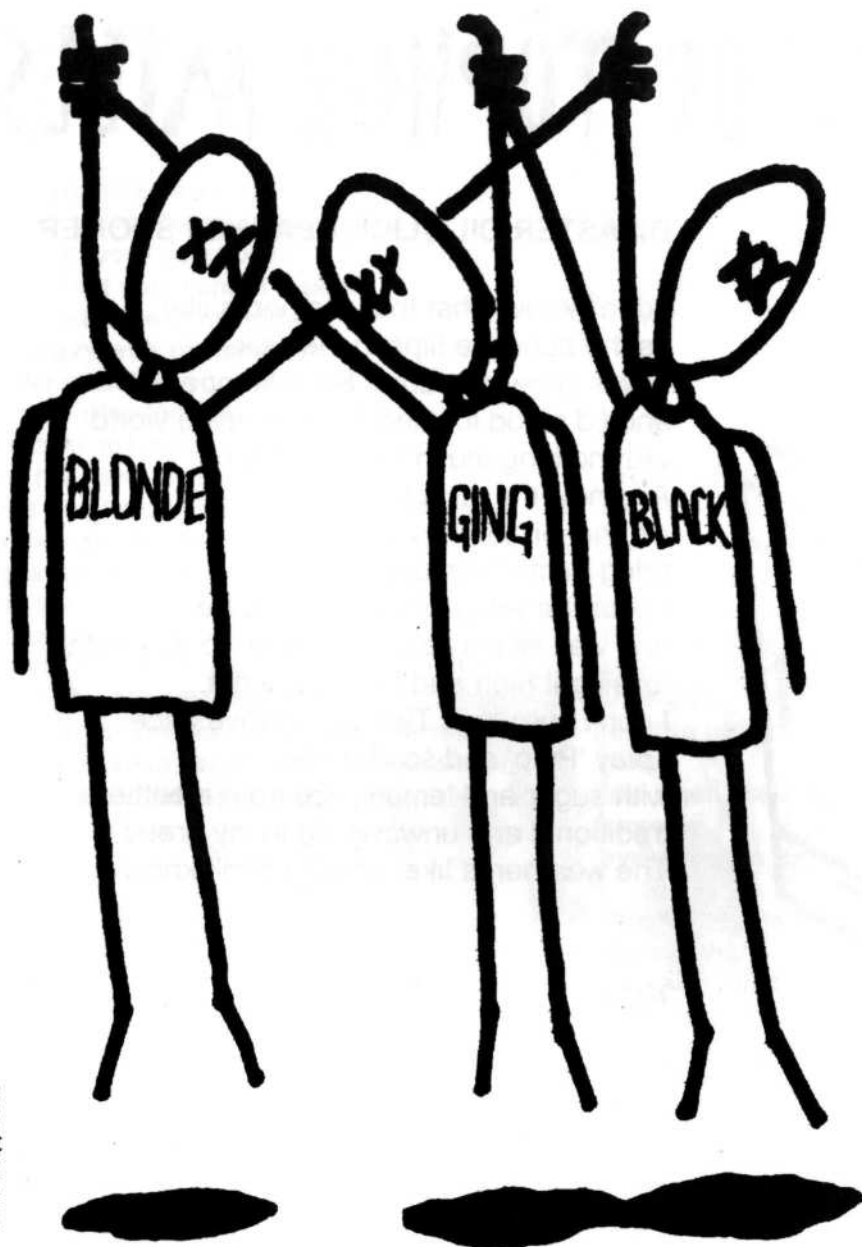
NEW

Showering in his pyjamas
to his great relief
their itchiness stopped.
He knew he should
have washed them first.

SUMMER

When drunk wearing shorts
pee gleefully against a tree
tingling on your legs





Fred Red, a short looking, ginger haired man, with freckled skin and faulty eyes reached for his coat and closed his desk draw, straining his shoulder somewhat in doing so as his coat was on the far side of the office. Nursing his strain he donned his cap, eager to leave and make his lonely route back to his rented basement flat in the middle of the east district. It was a dark dank room with draping walls and warped curtains but its view of the river was superb. Fred had been with the G.B.I. now for two years, recently promoted to sergeant and assigned to the Ginger Robberies Division along with his friend and partner Jake Tint. His promotion had forced him to find a bigger flat, closer to work and hence the move into his two-roomed home.

He reached for the bottle of scotch on the top shelf of his kitchen. It was a comfort to know it was there but it remained empty and he poured

himself a glass of orange. He muttered something about buying some whisky and slouched into his favourite armchair, content that he could always start his alcoholism tomorrow. He placed his sized nines onto the coffee table and leant back, allowing the cushions and protruding spring to dictate his comfort. No pain, however sharp, could prevent him from dozing off though.

Fred was awakened by a violent banging on the front door. It was Jake, or a man caught in the hinge. He opened the door, Jake stood, fist red and throbbing.

"Come on. Carrot's got a case for us. Some crooks in the North district, he wants us to go take a look."

Fred was at least surprised. He had only just solved the mystery of the shaven ginger tabbies that were popping up all over the city, locating the cat shaver in a grubby down-town anti-red club house. The case had

THE RED'S CARE

Humour from Stephen Bartley

taken him two months and he had been expecting time off.

"Time off what?" answered Jake, relaxing any subtlety at glancing at his watch.

"My office chair." Retorted Fred to no avail. Jake was already waiting in the car. "Hang on, I'll get my things."

With Jake driving, Fred alongside and the things in the back, they were soon on the road taking them into the much smelt North district, riding in Tint's Cortina, glossed in metallic orange, not only to match the colour of his stockings, but to go with the hefty clump of orange mop on top of his head, finely tailored into the shape of an ego.

"Wont be long now." Said Jake.

"So what's the trouble? Ginger wigs missing again?"

"Not this time." Jake was serious in his tone, "Some radicals, probably from out of town, hit a hairdressers in the Smudge district."

The case was bad, but being in the Smudge district made it all worse. The Smudge district was the roughest area of the city, not a smooth road in miles and a notorious anti-ginger settlement. It was known as the Smudge district because of its appearance from 3'000 feet. Rumour had it that as map makers were drawing up the city plans, a young inexperienced trainee had split ink on the north of the area. Unable to rescue the situation, being on a tight budget, the designers simply built the smudge instead of correcting the map, it being the cheaper option.

"The hairdresser guy is waiting for us. He's a bald guy, so we'll probably get some stick. Don't mention Bobby Charlton or Kojak and we should be alright. Okay?"

"I'll try and keep them out of the conversation."

They arrived at 'Short Cuts' at ten minutes after eleven minutes past, parking the car at the back of the premises so as not to draw attention to themselves. Fred cavorted with the shop owner, a Mr Shine, a short, bald man with wavy cheeks and false knees.

"Mr Shine?" enquired Fred, to a guarded nod from the weary shop owner. "I'm special agent Red, this is agent Tint. We'd like to ask you a few questions."

Mr Shine was not keen to respond, but the sight of the shattered debris of glass and hair gel was enough to act as an incentive.

"They came last night. Three of them. All wearing black from head to neck. They came with clubs and knives, slashing and cutting everything. They made off with the hair dye."

"I see" responded Fred, a remark so characteristic of him that he could say with his eyes closed. "How many bottles exactly?"

"All the ginger ones. I'd say about twenty. They swapped them for black ones. They didn't even want a receipt."

Jake thumbed a bottle of the replacement dye. "I'll send one down the station for prints, maybe sweat DNA. These crooks sweat like fat people."

"Tell me Mr Shine," Fred continued, "do you have any idea why people would do such a thing?"

The shop owner seemed uncomfortable, more so than when the agents had arrived, regarding the hair colour of the two men, shining in its full gingeriness in the morning light. "Well..." He began, "I dyed two young girls' hair yesterday, from blond to... well, your colour."

"Go on..."

"They left, happy with their new colour but they were jeered by the young youths that live around here. The old ones live out of town."

Fred ambled around the shop. It no longer annoyed him, the slaying of his hair colour. Be it condemning or complimentary he no longer saw the lighter side (he had once been strawberry blond) and took everything as a blatant attack on his status and hairic grouping. Mr Shine followed him.

"I don't think they like you reds. They say you're the outcasts of society, the alien of the modern world. The throwbacks."

"Yeah?" replied Fred, "When did you last have hair?" disregarding official procedure for questioning and deciding simply to hate the bastard. "That'll do for now Mr Shine. I'll be in touch... probably with a baseball bat."

The drive back was quiet. The car had been stolen and they walked the six miles back to the station.

The Ginger Investigation Bureau was on the West side of the old city, that being the centre of the new city and the North side of the one they expected in the next twenty-five

years. Its three floors made it the smallest judicial department in the city but its size did not discourage the team of dedicated red-heads who saw it as their personal duty to wipe out the oppression of their hair colour that has long been the epicentre of mirth for many a generation. Chief Barry Carrot was at the helm, an ex-beat man (he had bruises to prove it) he had formed the establishment after his forced departure from the metropolitan force, when he grew his hair below the shoulder length guideline. Trouble started with his, all dark haired, and inevitably he had to leave. His office was on the top floor. He called Red and Tint in.

"Friday then. Meet here at twelve. We'll hit the place just before dawn, she can follow... It's always more dramatic that way."

"Come in Red, Tint. What have you got for me?"

"No gifts I'm afraid sir, and not much of a start. Definitely a hairist attack. No slurs but ginger hair dye was taken. They probably couldn't spell."

"Or they had no pen."

"Anything else missing?" The chief twisted at his pen as he spoke.

"My car sir." But this went unheard as the chief sagged, disturbed greatly by what he was hearing. Aghast and upset Carrot issued his brief.

"I want you two on this full time, give anything else you have to Agent Shade and Special Agent Highlight. It's imperative that we catch these..." He gulped.

"Of course sir," said Fred, "we'll get onto it right away."

"Oh, one more thing chaps." The chief lifted his head enough to speak in the manner of Hamlet's last words. "There's a lot riding on this men. Failure now, and we'll never be taken seriously again. Remember that..."

Far away as the crow flies, or even further as the miner digs or the crow flies carrying luggage, in a northern district hide out, an anti-red meeting was under way. Several small looking men, or one or two large women, were gathered around trestle tables stacked with coffee cups, tortilla chips and cucumber sandwiches. The leader spoke.

"Alright gentlemen. The raid last night went well, but that's just one shop in hundreds, and I've got a feeling the next one won't be as easy... although that could be indigestion." He

took off his gloves but kept on his garters. Another man spoke.

"Any idea which one will be next?"

"Some. 'Gladys' Cut and Blow', probably, but keep it under your hats." Several members replaced their caps. "If you don't have hats keep it in your shoes or something. Gladys got a new shipment of red stuff in last Tuesday, most of it should be still there. Nobody wants the ginger poison now they know we're around!" There was that gangster-type laugh all round, coffee was spilt and floors had to be cleaned. "Friday then. Meet here at twelve. We'll hit the place just before dawn, she can follow... It's always more dramatic that way."

There was general agreement all round and the meeting ended, making the way for a W.I. lecture due to start soon after.

With no car, Red and Tint scootered there way down to the city laboratory, where tests were being run on the canisters of black hair dye. They arrived soon after four. The scientist was studying a specimen as they entered.

"Have you got anything for us?" Jake asked.

The scientist's expression remained the same for the entire conversation, an expression similar in appearance to an English tourist trying to speak French, lips pouting. "There is cheese and wine on the side there."

"Any Prints?"

"No Prints. But strangely or not there's a ginger hair caught in the lid of this one." He handed it over. "Look."

They looked, and surely enough a red hair jutted out like only a jut could.

"It's one of ours alright," said Fred, implying that it belonged to a ginger person. "Any ideas?" The scientist muttered something about flying wheelchairs but otherwise remained silent, yet his facial expression suggested he was on the verge of something. He sneezed.

"You say all the ginger dye was gone." They both agreed. "Yet a red hair was found caught in the lid of the black filth here. That could suggest something."

"Like what?" asked Jake.

"The culprit was a red head himself..."

The three men stood motionless and Fred could have sworn he heard drums.

The agents left, unsure of the evaluations but it was all they

had to go on, the scooters had been nicked.

"What do you think Tint?"

"I don't know. Bus it?"

"The case Tint."

"Oh. Well the doc wasn't much help but he gave us something. I say we head north and only stop if we find what we're looking for or hit water."

Fred agreed and hailed a taxi, throwing pebbles, stones and anything else he found lying around. "Damn bald drivers!" he yelled.

"Now come on Fred, they've every reason to be bald. Now come on, we've got a bus to catch."

Fred hoped it would weigh less than the burden upon their shoulders.

It was 5am when Fred was awoken in mid-sleep by the telephone. It was a vicious machine and it chose to deal him blows to the head with the receiver. On the line was the chief.

"You and Tint better get moving. Another shop's been hit. Gladys's place in the north. Get Tint and go up there. Fetch me lacquer and get back here when you have something."

Fred did not replace the receiver, in spite of the phone which had a tendency to lie, sometimes ringing when there was no caller and other times remaining silent, the phone quietly minding its own business in a corner, looking all innocent, as an important call was trying to get through. He slurped coffee while looking from his basement window. Grabbing his coat with swiftness not matched by accuracy he walked into the street wearing his schoolboy yellow cagoule.

He met Tint on the Bridge street corner. He had on a leather sack and his regulation ginger sash across his bow.

His ears were drooping and his arms were pert, and to attention. They both felt an anxiety and tension only brought on by the promise of action or constipation. Now they had to head north, again to Smudge, to aid Gladys. She needed security and a new name and being a red head herself the agents were only too happy to oblige.

They arrived at the crime scene with flowers and an application for Gladys to be called Dilliah. She was waiting by the door, rather she was hand cuffed to it, and she welcomed them with open arms, or an open arm. They released her and followed her to the store cupboard. Before them was a ginger mess, bottles strewn everywhere in random. Tint winced and was forced to turn

away only to see "Red's are dead" sprayed onto the back wall.

"Such potential, all wasted."

He nearly sobbed.

"There, there... there, there."

Gladys passed around biscuits. "They came before dawn. It's always a dramatic time for a raid. The digestives might be a bit hard... They burst in, dragged me from my bed and ruined all my red hair dye, just like that. It only arrived on Tuesday..."

"It's okay Glad. Delilah. You go upstairs, we'll lock up." When they got back to headquarters the chief was waiting for them.

"Here's your lacquer sir."

Another hairist attack. A whole case of the red gold ripped up."

The chief had been staring at the wall. "Right, it's time to be decisive... do you think?" Red nodded, Tint did a sort of dance. "From past evidence it seems they'll strike again pretty soon. We have to catch whoever is running this organisation."

The chief had been staring at the wall.

"Right, it's time to be decisive... do you think?"

"Do we have any suspects?" asked Tint.

"A couple," replied the chief, "we've got a file on this guy." He held up the file for Red and Tint to see. "Claude Greasy. But it's only a file, he's a bin man, he doesn't have anything to do with it. Then there's this guy. Andre Rouge. Over from the East. Bit of an extremist." He stroked his chin. On the floor his cat looked up jealously. "He ran guns to the blackheads fighting the anglo-ginger force in the hair wars five years ago."

"I've heard of him." Jake interposed, reaching for the file as the chief strolled up and down. Fred was busy preening. "I was with the King's Own Redheaded Cavaliers for eighteen months, we ran in to him a couple of times, our jeep had no steering wheel." "So you know him?" asked the chief.

"Only by yelp, but I'm sure I could pick him out again."

"Good. We're setting up mock hairdressers in Smudge, we want you two to be there. You're my best men. We've organised a delivery of three tonnes of ginger dye this afternoon and a crate of ginger beer for good measure."

"We'll be there sir."

They stirred from their chairs in beautiful synchronisation and left the office. After discussing the finer details

of the operation they settled in a bar in the heart of Ginger Town.

The barman was a jovial man with thin ginger hair and even thinner pockets yet he let the first two waters go on the house. They gratefully accepted the gesture of solidarity and sat in a corner booth to go over the plans finer points.

"What underwear will you be wearing?" asked Fred, holding his glass to the light, investigating its slight yet distinctive greyness.

"I don't think we need worry about such finer detail, but they'll be blue briefs." Jake poured his water into a plant.

"What about defence. Do we need to be armed?" The anxiety clear on his face. Resembling his nose actually.

"You'll need your arms, yes, but G.B.I. agents never carry guns. You'll need your regulation webbing, ginger spray and paint shield. If your hair changed colour from a spray attack your morale could fade as you're being used as a dance floor."

Soon after a second drink they left, thanking the barman for at least putting the water in glasses. They arrived in Smudge early afternoon under the cover of darkness. Hiding the cover in an unused bin they set up in the barber shop, each perched for the night on top of a tonne of ginger hair dye. Fred laid back and tried to sleep. Since the case had begun they had been working nearly non-stop and Jake also tried to get some rest.

In the Smudge anti-red club house, members were preparing for another dawn raid, this time lead by dawn. The leader wore his badly knitted black balaclava. Fully rolled down it revealed only his nose and left ear, but he used it regardless, as he did with other things of little use, like feather hair nets and Gaelic.

"Is everybody ready?" he called, to a muted cry of 'yes', the signal that they were all ready. The gang numbered seven but on dark nights could not be distinguished from a mob of ten. They boarded the transit van, cunningly painted see-through so as not to draw any attention from the public. They circled the area for several minutes, surveying the shop and trying to find a place to park, settling on a single yellow line outside of a chippy. The street was silent. Not a creature moved, although one was stuck under the left front wheel.

Fred was shaken awake by Jake who was having trouble sleeping. Suddenly the door rattled again. Jake took action. Fred had just woken up.

"Fred, is there a back door?
We could run for it!"

"I'll check!" and in a moment Fred disappeared at full pace, not even looking back at his friend as he frantically hurled a box of doughnuts brought in earlier. He was gone in no time and left Jake alone to welcome the guests who by now had knocked down the door and were on their way to his face with a club.

"Evening gents," he offered.
"A little off the top?"

"Out of my way ginger! Tie him up Blacky!"

Blacky, a short chap with solid black hair and unmistakable stringy eyes marched forward, lasso in hand, but Jake did not move. There was a reason however.

"Shit! My keks are caught! Fred. I'm stuck!" in a matter of seconds his arms were flapping and he was tied to the chair, now closer to him than his centre parting. "What do you want?" feeling it best to keep questions simple.

"You keep out of this carrot top. Lads, swap the dye and destroy that poison!"

They quickly set about their task, ripping and shredding until their fingers were red, forcing them to rest, but after the first few cases of this it was found to be the dye causing the redness and all rests were cancelled.

"This'll never work," yelled Jake. He wriggled in the chair and inevitably began to itch. "You can wipe this lot out but more will follow. You can never get rid of people like us. You'd have to shave us all and then it would still grow back!" He felt good.

"Blacky, fetch the clippers!"

He felt bad. No camera could have caught the speed of Jake's facial change from smirk to sulk as he lay prone, watching his ginger twine floating down to the tiled floor. As Blacky finished the perfect mohican Fred returned, out of breath from his escapade with the fictional back door.

"There's no door! Shit, what's going on? Who's the hedge?"

"It's me, idiot. Get on to H.Q.!"

"H.Q.?" The balaclava clad leader stopped ransacking for a second. "H.Q.? Who are you?"

flashing his badge and briefly a section of his bare midriff as he snatched too quickly, Fred gave them the stern reply. "I'm Special Agent Red, this is Agent Tint. We're from the G.B.I.!"

With speed the raiders rushed for the door. Fred untied his partner. He chased them to the door, attempting to reach it before the first thug but he collided with a vicious

looking man with a mohican. First to reach them was Blacky. Swinging his left arm Fred saw the time was nine-thirty, swinging his right foot, Jake caught Blacky on the chin. Two others had managed to escape the melee, one through the doorway and another, nicknamed "senseless", through the window. This left four. Jake, an intelligent man with a passionate interest in his own personal safety noticed the imbalance.

"Fred, let's leg it!" he yelled, edging tentatively towards the pavement.

"No, we can't let them do this Tint. Not now. Think of all the redheads all over the world. This is for them!"

With unheard of conviction Fred grabbed the chair and began waving it around him like it was some sort of nightclub game. The others stood in bewilderment, unable to find refuge from the crates of red as they were now spilling across the floor.

Grabbing the nearest thing he could lay his hands on, Jake joined the fray, swinging violently a dog-eared copy of "Cosmopolitan", a sight only equalled by Fred's enthusiasm with the chair, to which was now added a strange "Whoa!" noise.

"You'll not get away with this!" shouted Fred, in rhythm with his pelvis that gyrated in time to the swings. "Whack him with the fashion magazine, Jake!"

Jake swooped forward but was hit by a leg, a chair leg, flying through the air, and he collided with one of the gang, the leader. On catching the magazine in the forehead the leader let out a terrific cry, it really was good, one which Jake had heard before. Jake landed from his flight, landing in the dye, causing a tidal wave that was sure to effect the moon the following night. "That's Andre Rouge's yelp!"

At the same time Fred lunged the chair at an adversary who made a bee-line for the exit. The chair caught him on the eyebrow and he fell concuss to the floor, out of the action, decommissioned, dribbling. The leader's options were diminishing before his eyes. He slowly stood up with great care, as if his head would topple if tilted any more than five degrees either way. "Let me go and you shall both be heavily rewarded. I can promise you." This he announced, being careful not to offend. "How would you like to be blond?"

Git. That did it for Fred. Beating away the leaders suddenly drawn pistol he reached for his own side-arm, the standard issue ginger spray, a non-toxic gunge with a range of twenty feet, a substance that stains clothes and skin for a month. Spraying wildly, catching three of them as they ran for the door. They received a line

through the under-arm, not being enough however to curtail their retreat as they fled into a maze of red coloured lights and sirens in the street.

The leader stood alone with Fred. We've got you now Rouge." He said, wiping his brow for sweat. With no alternative Rouge leapt for the window, crashing through its remains onto the pavement outside. With a reflex action, using the now prone Jake as a spring board, Fred dived after him, grabbing a bottle of black dye on the way. With Rouge only yards away from safety Fred threw the bottle with force strong enough to make his tennis elbow even worse, but the bottle landed in the path of the masked assailant, smashing into a shower of tiny sparkling crystals, spewing black goo that spread out in front of Rouge. The traction of plimsoll on colouring chemicals was not sufficient for Rouge to keep upright, falling to the ground, wincing with pain with stained black hands. Several agents took hold of him. The chief too had arrived at Smudge.

"Caught black handed you could say chief." Fred greeted the chief getting a rare smile from his boss. Fred's own smile was so big that it nearly met at the back of his neck.

"Good work you two. You've made ginger's proud." Tint walked over and was brushing himself down. "Take off that wig Tint."

Andre Rouge's mask was removed to confirm their suspicions. He was ugly.

"So he was a redhead after all." Exclaimed the chief. Jake sunk his head in shame.

"I haven't felt this ashamed since the ginger riots two years ago." He turned away.

"I can't stand this colouring. I did what anyone in my position should have done. Admit it, you hate it. You long for black locks and the same coloured eyebrows. With red hair we don't even tan!" Rouge was dragged away to a waiting police van and driven away.

"Well," said Fred, "I'm going home."

"Me too," agreed Jake, "My car or yours?"

"Yours." Replied Fred, and they set off walking, counting their freckles for loyalty and swigging a ginger ale. As they walked they passed a young boy. He was laughing and called out as he passed, "Ah, ginger!"

The End.

The Rogue Market Journal™

THE POWER PLAY ON POPULAR CULTURE

Divesting Investments In Humour

I like Robin Williams. He's trading in the low 30's, so I bought 700 shares. He didn't do too hot, so I sold him and bought 15 shares of Bill Gates, who was trading in the mid 200's. After that, I sold everything and bought 500 shares of Princess Diana, based upon a rumour that I'd

times, fictional or non-fictional as the case may be. At this time, the limits of the game are to buying or selling, but in discussions with Bill Fisher, co-producer of the Rogue Market, there have been considerations for trading between players as well as chat, selling short, going long, and other options.

You can always tell when something on the web is truly popular by the number of server crashes. This is due to the fact that the more people that

trading at \$85.15 per share. On the other hand, Arnold Schwarzenegger is trading for \$332.91 a share.

Another interesting aspect of this game is the Rumor Mill. If you happen to know something, or even if you don't, you may want to write something for the Rumor Mill to see if you can affect change in the market. Mind this, however...you are responsible for whatever you write. If libellous or slanderous, you are accountable. But how I use it is to buy into someone (low) and then tell what I know from fact, and see if my news triggers a buying frenzy. Sometimes it has.

Like all games, it's to be taken as a place to play. But like most competitive games, it has a lot of opportunities for strategy and cooperation. You may even form investment partnerships to pool your wealth potential.

For about 10 to 20 minutes, I find that it's a fun stop on the internet, and then I leave and come back another day. Sometimes I gain profits, and sometimes I don't. But as it's a game, you can't lose for the fun you'll have at the Rogue Market. (c) 1997 David Brager

Name	Hist High	Hist Low	High	Low	Last	Volume
Joan Allen	35.00	7.26	29.58	29.58	29.58	0
Gabrielle Anwar	118.70	10.00	57.05	57.05	57.05	0
Patricia Arquette	95.58	10.00	90.21	90.21	90.21	0
Lauren Bacall	101.73	10.00	96.87	96.87	96.87	0
Drew Barrymore	88.12	7.32	88.12	87.83	88.12	30
Cathy Bates	36.87	10.00	15.77	15.77	15.77	0
Clara Bellar	1001.76	9.50	116.43	116.43	116.43	0
Annette Bening	111.42	10.00	106.50	106.42	106.42	2
Halle Berry	330.53	10.00	329.91	329.48	329.48	10
Juliette Binoche	157.72	10.00	129.30	129.30	129.30	0
Brenda Blethlyn	68.82	10.00	52.97	52.97	52.97	0
Sandra Bullock	215.76	10.00	215.76	214.50	215.76	63
Phoebe Cates	76.34	10.00	69.25	69.25	69.25	0
Glenn Close	18.09	2.46	17.69	17.69	17.69	25
Jamie Lee Curtis	26.75	10.00	26.04	26.04	26.04	0

heard that someone was considering offering her a cameo in a movie, which I thought was a brilliant move, even if it never comes to pass. What am I talking about? A game, of sorts, that I found on the Internet.

It's called *The Rogue Market* and it's about the most effective new concept in popularity contests. In the Rogue Market, you begin the game with \$10,000 in Rogue Dollars, or \$15,000 if you fill out their questionnaire. From there, you buy or sell stock in their market. Mind you, there are no actual cash values for these dollars, and at the end of each game, it can be assumed that a "winner" will be selected, and then they will begin a new game, but that has not happened yet.

Now, the stock you are buying is in public figures, from past and present

access the site, the more drain it is on their main computer. According to Mr. Fisher, they have had to change servers three times, and are currently on a Sun-station, which is a fairly mighty and



powerful mini-mainframe computer. What I find is most interesting is how the market trends seem to be paralleling the actual popularity markets. At this moment of writing, Emma Thompson is trading at \$115.78 while Sir Anthony Hopkins is only

TRY IT YOURSELF! HOW TO BUY INTO CINDY CRAWFORD!!

If you want to try out the Rogue Market yourself, you'll need full web-access (not just email).

Point that browser at:

<http://www.roguemarket.com>

You'll need to register first, and supply them with your email address. You'll be given a password, and then it's just a case of logging in, looking through the listings and taking the plunge.

The Rogue Market is free to play, although spending too much time looking through the listings will push up that phone bill. Downloading the page will let you browse at your leisure.

Happy trading, people.

THE MANIC STREET PREACHERS



LOOKS LIKE WE GOT OURSELVES A READER

1996 saw the Manics finally rise all the way to the top, with the album "Everything Must Go" fully realising their potential. They've often cited literature as a major influence on them as a band as individuals. We asked guitarist Nicky Wire to explain about some of the books that have helped shape them.

"Homage To Catatonia" George Orwell

I could have picked '1984' or 'Animal Farm', but this book typifies the Orwell spirit. I admire not only his writing, but his whole life.

"American Psycho" Brett Easton



Ellis

This is the real thing satire at it's most hurtful. Many have tried to copy it, but this book is, for me, the best of the '90's.

"V" Tony Harrison

It's a very long poem that I like. Also, it's controversial but very moral underneath. I saw it as a short film on Channel Four years ago.

"High Windows" Phillip Larkin

I bought this collection with my mam in Cardiff when I was fifteen. I still love it today. I love Larkin's wit and mundane lifestyle; it's like my own.

"The State and Revolution" Lenin

Speaks for itself; big influence on the band.

"The Plague" Albert Camus

A writer, a goalkeeper, and a member of the resistance. He was also so handsome. A fantastic book.

"The Guerilla Tapestry" Patrick Jones

He's my brother and has had a massive influence on the band. It's a book of real anger and tenderness, and deserves a much wider audience.

"Hamlet" Shakespeare

The greatest and most original story ever told.

"The Picture Of Dorian Gray" Oscar Wilde

A wonderful film and book, of course, it scared me when I was younger. I'm not a massive fan of his, but this is definitely one of my

favourites.



"When Was Wales" Gwyn A. Williams

Truly inspirational anger and passion but clinical historical critique as well. Romance and academia combined.

Nicky Wire

IN PRINT

LIKEWISE REVIEWS

THE WOMAN WHO WALKED INTO DOORS

Roddy Doyle

Minerva £6.99 pb

Doyle has safely carved a place for himself in British fiction, with *The Commitments* now a household name. He has his detractors, for sure, but his latest novel should set down a fair few hecklers still ranting. It's rare to find a man writing from a woman's point of view with such accuracy, without condescension, and with so much compassion. The vulnerability and courage of Paula Spencer is never less than real, and illustrates just how brave and strong a writer Doyle is turning out to be. The life of Paula, a woman in a loveless and violent marriage, will move the hardest of readers, and shock a fair few too. Doyle is always entertaining, and often moving, but this latest offering is possibly the best work he's ever done. Buy it and show the man some appreciation.

Gavin Leigh



ICON THOUGHTSTYLE MAGAZINE: Premier issue UNCUT: The Music & Movie Magazine: Premier issue

Please judge these offerings by their covers - they're stunning. A spooky sepia photo of David Lynch crooks its weird finger and beckons you into *ICON*, and the texture of the paper is remarkable, all sort of grainy and touchable. *ICON* "is about those people who haven't wound up in the middle", says the editor, "Average seems like hell to me, much worse than failure." Although far from average (and the screaming quality makes me weep), this can come across as a little humourless and austere stylish. And despite describing itself as a "magazine for men" (oh no, I'm a Lady.



Doh.), there are no women in this, nudie or whatsoever. Very weird.

Meanwhile the door to *UNCUT* is mostly matt with licks of gloss. Ingenious. This is where *Q* and *Empire* meet to cut the crap. This is more of a coffee table book or object of material desire than IPC magazines usual no-brainers (e.g. *Loaded*. Shudder). This is free from any filler articles. This is full of Stuff. *UNCUT*'s got an itch to scratch. *UNCUT*'s got a passion. Let's go.

Jemma Johnson



TICKLE THE PUBLIC

Matthew Engel

Indigo £8.99 pb

In 1953 the Daily Mirror printed the headline "The Queen's Surprise: Breathtaking Gown breaks with Tradition". "Di Found Knickers in Charles Pocket" (The News of the World 1995) shows just how far the popular press has evolved, for better or for worse. Engel charts the development of the press from its early beginnings to present day, and while a scholarly work to be sure, it's a riotous, sleazy and scandalous journey. As the 19th century poem goes, *Tickle the public, make them grin, the more you tickle the more you'll win. Teach the public, you'll never*

get rich, you'll live in a gutter and die in a ditch. Wise words in the job of selling paper. Engel gives a fair and insightful look at the subject, with accomplishment and instinct. Quite brilliant and very necessary.

Gavin Leigh

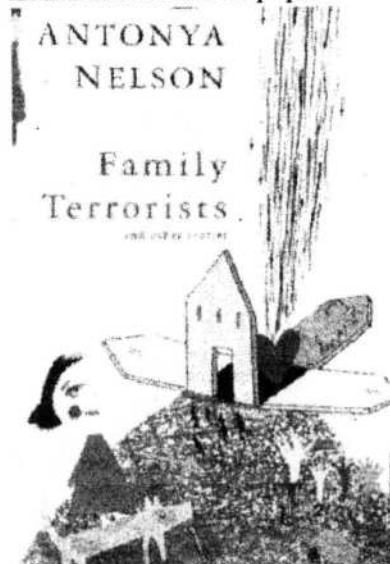
FAMILY TERRORISTS AND OTHER STORIES

Antonya Nelson

Picador £6.99 pb

'Family Terrorists' is a collection of eight short stories all based around families, and specifically, the troubles they can cause. The main story, the novella from which this collection gets its title, concerns the aptly named Link family as they re-unite on the eve of their parents remarrying each other after a six year divorce. This odd, but happy event only results in emphasising the stresses and strains hidden under the surface of the family's relationship as they assemble for the big day.

Now admittedly, a whole book on inter-familiar strife doesn't sound a whole lot of fun, but who said literature was about fun anyway? That's beside the point, at any rate, because Nelson's stories, amongst all the petty intrigue, emotional black-mail and gossip, are rich with compassion, warmth and dry humour to elevate them from mere kitchen sink drama or soap opera



mundanities. Excellent characterisations and spot-on observations are bound to trigger memories from your own life and family, as the best fiction often does.

If you fancy a change from crack addicted net-head gangsters, surfing serial killers from Mars or books about bloody football, give this a go. You may be pleasantly surprised.

Phil Bond.

TEN MEN

Elisa Seagrave

Faber & Faber £10.99 hb

Beginning with her childhood in Madrid and ending with the death of her father, Seagrave's book takes us through her life and loves with the emphasis on her relationships with men, from her younger sensitive brother to the lovers that come and go, yet it is her father, a stuffy but very weird guy who dominates the book. Seagrave has certainly led an interesting life, belonging to a wealthy and tolerant family, and coming of age in the 'Swinging Sixties'. She took full advantage of the opportunities that her background and the era offered her.



Ten Men
Elisa Seagrave

However, as a book, it all seems a bit too personal, we only get her viewpoint throughout, which I found quite claustrophobic. Ultimately, though not a bad book by any means, it does read like someone's diaries that have been professionally bound and edited.

Phil Bond

TALES FROM THE CLIT

Ed. By Cherie Matrix

AK Press £7.95 pb

Pornography is going through an identity crisis. It's always been a male province, with women preferring to go somewhere cleaner. Or so you were lead to believe. It's always been a difficult area for many, carrying with it all the stigma of someone who doesn't recycle, or litters the countryside. *Tales From The Clit* is an admirable collection of essays documenting women's positive thoughts about pornography, including one from the irrepressible Annie Sprinkle. All equally fascinating, there is a wealth of argument here, stating a case for anti-censorship that cannot be ignored. It has always struck me (and many others) that violence is seen as less obscene than sex, and the quicker we can all admit that it's

a valuable part of existence, the better. A welcome and enlightening book.

Gavin Leigh

THE FOOTBALL FACTORY

John King

Vintage £5.99 pb

Following in the footsteps of *Fever Pitch* and taking a few pointers from Mr Welsh, *The Football Factory* is nothing if not well written, never shying from realism and quite brutal with it's lack of remorse. In fact King writes a little too well, he scared the shit out of me. As a document of our times, it's a library must, and if it is disturbing, it's due to its accuracy. *Select* magazine said "It will do for football hooliganism what *Trainspotting* did for Edinburgh housing estates", which is possibly a worrying idea. It's bleak, hard-hitting



and valid, but also perhaps a necessary point made on our society. It has to be said that there is something wrong when a book this scary is so real. John King may have been a hooligan, or he may not. But he's definitely a writer.

Gavin Leigh

IF YOU LEAVE ME CAN I COME TOO?

Cynthia Heimel

Picador £5.99

Heimel is perhaps better known for her *Playboy* and *Village Voice* columns, and of course, she's the woman who bought us *Get Your Tongue Out of my Mouth, I'm Kissing You Goodbye*. This, her latest book, is another collection of her columns, running as they do, like a US sitcom; sad, happy, weird, but always hilariously funny. She rants and raves and philosophises about anything and everything. Dogs, men, sex, therapists, women, more dogs, feminism, racism, and yet more dogs, all treated with the same candour. Her delivery is fast, furious and frighteningly funny; she hits the giggle button right on the head every time. Personally, I can't wait to get between the covers of her next offering. One for the ladies, and for the female in every man.

Fayzie



SEPTEMBER COMMANDO: GESTURES OF FUTILITY AND FRUSTRATION

John Yates

AK Press £7.95 pb large format

September Commando continues where the last book, *Stealworks*, left off, and features many of the subjects that have made Yates (in)famous before, poverty, consumerism, police brutality, racism, public unrest and gun control. The artwork ranges from fifties pin-ups to scenes from Independence Day, all adorned with hard-hitting, sharp, media unfriendly slogans that would not be out of place on thirty foot high billboards. These certainly capture the spirit of the title - the work seems to come from a deep sense of frustration that he must feel about the state of the world that we are in, and the fact that many of us are not in a position to do much about it. At least there is somebody out there who's trying to keep us all awake to what's going on.

Martin Appleton

Let's Put the Future Behind Us

Jack Womack

Flamingo £8.99 pb

Set in contemporary Moscow, *Let's Put the Future Behind Us* centres around successful entrepreneur Max Borodin, who owns, along with several banks, the Universal Management Company, and upmarket forging service who supply bureaucratic paperwork from passports to KGB documents. As Max says, "We can prove Kennedy shot himself - as long as we're paid in advance". Max's life is complicated enough already. His wife Tanya suspects him of having an affair (which he is) and his lover Sonya is the wife of close business associate Dmitri, but things are about to get a lot worse. Dmitri gets Max involved in a scheme to export stolen valuables to the West with the aid of Georgian gangsters. Max's role is to cover up Dmitri's involvement in a previous plot which ended up with one of their gang being executed due to Dmitri's betrayal.

LET'S PUT THE FUTURE BEHIND US



A NOVEL BY
**JACK
WOMACK**

Borodin is doubtful enough about this scheme, but his suspicions are confirmed when he learns Dmitri's other partner in the venture is a mad fascist politician who thinks he's investing in a plan to flood the States with forged dollars. It turns out that Dmitri is conning everyone and predictably, his greed catches up with him and events take an increasingly violent turn, escalating to a bloody confrontation in the surreal surroundings of Moscow's pet market. Chuck in a few sub-plots about a decidedly dodgy crematorium and a lunatic plan to build an American style theme park based on the Communist era and you have an excellent noir-ish thriller with a keen satirical edge. Womack draws a vivid picture of a Moscow troubled by racist tension, corruption and organised crime which is just as compelling as Ellroy's MacCarthy era L.A. Spillane's New York. It is a society in which those with the money, good suits and CD players are easy to find, but everyone has to queue for gas or bread. The frequent references to the neglected decaying buildings of the Communist era serve to reinforce the sense of a society in disarray and struggling to re-define itself in the post glasnost era. *Let's Put The Future Behind Us* is a refreshingly original and highly entertaining addition to the hard-boiled genre. Highly recommended.

Phil Bond

CHAOS

James Gleick

Minerva £7.99 pb

Normally apprehensive about popular science books, not least because this one was talking about the theory of predicting and understanding seemingly random events, I was most surprised by *Chaos*. Whilst being necessarily intellectual, Gleick's book is still incredibly readable, with many of the popular buzzwords such as *strange attractors*, *the butterfly effect* and *mandelbrot sets* being explained in a

way that makes the whole subject understandable to non-experts like myself. He also succeeds in bringing to life the histories of the scientists involved in discovering these theories of randomness, events which themselves were often quite by chance. An entertaining book which might just result in changing the way you look at events. But don't take that as a forecast.

Martin Appleton.

THE PSYCHOTRONIC VIDEO GUIDE

Michael J. Weldon

Titan £19.99 pb

Time for all those devotees of late night, back shelf video classics will be rubbing their hands together for this one. The original *Psychotronic Encyclopedia of Film* was a book necessary for any film collector, covering so much material missed by the Halliwells and Variety's. This update goes even further, it's a bigger and better guide to all that is marginal in film, from the beach babes of the fifties to the latest classics. Of course, with the advent of cable, it's even more a necessity. You used to only need one film guide; now you need two. The other one and this one. Essential.

Gavin Leigh



BACK TOWN BLUES

D.G. Compton

Vista £5.99 pb

Compton's second mystery based around the Alex Duncan character, again takes place in Liverpool. The ex-policeman turned jazz-pianist still can't help but get mixed up in it however hard he tries. Opening with the killing of a local drug baron, Dancer Drew, by an anonymous woman, *Back Town Blues* starts its trek toward conclusion slowly (in fairness, much of the lengthy explanation is necessary). But even when the story kicks in, it fails to ignite. The full knowledge of the conclusion, often a clever device, here merely undermines the tension. An early plotline concerning Alex becoming suspect number one is given a seeing off before it can become interesting. One police interview, one apology, no problem. The characters fail to breathe, and the climax is

unfortunately disappointing. Compton may well write that elusive thriller that hits the mark, but not this time.

Gavin Leigh

The Complete Counter-SCHWA Kit Bill Barker

Schwa Press £9.99 pb

They've been around for years, they got onto soap-operas, quiz-shows, you'll have seen them in the street, but probably never noticed (then again perhaps you were never meant to). What I'm talking about are alien heads, or more accurately, Bill Barker's SCHWA Corporation. In an area of our culture that is seemingly overcrowded with cute little



grey men, twelve mile wide flying saucers and phenomena hunting secret agents, comes a refreshing and twisted look at the alien invasion (or is that occupation?). For your money you get all manner of beautifully constructed ephemera to help you stay one step ahead of the invaders, and the rest of the human race for that matter, from lost human luggage tags to the handy key chain crazy-meter that helps you make sense

of what is going on, and the emergency personal life television which turns all of life's dramas into comedies. Then there is the book - eighty or so pages of paranoia-inducing black and white images, guiding us through the many facets of a consumer-orientated happiness-is-mandatory society (our own perhaps), where a gigantic Schwa corporation controls all aspects of actual and perceived reality. It is a society that seemingly cannot be resisted by the stick people who live there, but merely guarded against during their day-to-day existence. Your warped grin at the situations that the hapless stick people find themselves in will gradually disappear as you realise that their affairs are all too close to our own.

The closest parallel to it all is John Carpenter's film 'They Live', except that picture had a mildly hopeful ending... This is all getting too much for me - I'm off to hide under the bedcovers with my defence kit in hand.

Martin Appleton

BRIGHT ANGEL TIME

Martha McPhee

Faber & Faber £15.99 hb

Seen through the eyes of a young girl, Kate, and set in the Seventies, Martha McPhee's novel tells the story of her family - her mother and two sisters as they struggle to rebuild their lives after the parents marriage breaks up. Mom falls in love with her therapist, Anton, an



ex-priest with five kids of his own, and this huge new family end up crammed together in a campervan. Anton seems the complete opposite of Kate's geologist father; he's flashy, a gambler and an extrovert, so of course things don't always run smoothly as all parties try to adjust to their strange new lifestyle, particularly for Kate who seems to have trouble adjusting to a more chaotic life than she'd been used to. McPhee paints a vivid picture of post hippydom seventies America in this excellent debut novel, wonderfully written with an excellent array of unusual, living, breathing characters.

Phil Bond

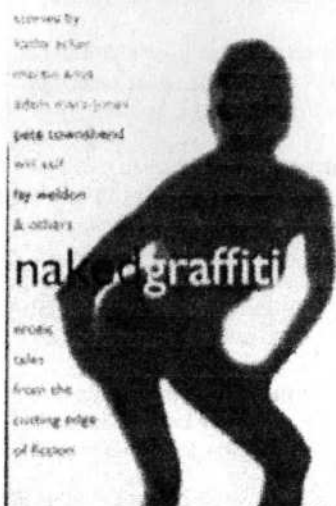
NAKED GRAFFITI

Edited by Richard Glyn Jones

Indigo £6.99 pb

Subtitled 'erotic tales from the cutting edge of fiction' this is no run of the mill erotic compilation; it's more likely to stimulate your mind than your loins. As editor Richard Glyn Jones states in the introduction, erotic literature is in vogue at the moment and "bookshops are full of the stuff." While he welcomes this in some ways, he bemoans the fact that most of it is sheer fantasy and "badly written fantasy at that." Of course,

there's nothing wrong with fantasy, even badly written fantasy, but if that's what you're after, this isn't the book for you. The stories in this collection are, for the most part, much more realistic, dealing with all the baggage that comes along with sexuality; frustration, jealousy, AIDS, impotence - the whole gamut of emotions at experiences. Rather than being sexy stories, these are stories about sex and sexuality.



Jones has assembled an eclectic array of contributors, from obvious choices like Marco Vassi, to the more mainstream 'biggies' like Fay Weldon and Martin Amis - whose witty 'Let Me Count the Times' is one of the highlights of the book. Throw in people like the controversial author/journalist Will Self, and bizarrely, Pete Townshend and John McVicar and you have a highly diversified collection.

As with all compilations, the quality varies, nevertheless, this is a fine volume that stands out from the rest of the mass market erotica of the moment.

Phil Bond.

BUNKER MAN

Duncan McLean

Vintage £5.99 pb

Rob Catto is the new head janitor at a school on the north-east coast of Scotland. He's happily married to Karen, a successful woman in her own right, and is seemingly a carefree, happy go lucky kind of guy. But that's all about to change with breathtaking rapidity.

A strange man in a hooded parka, the bunker man of the title, is seen loitering near the school, and almost overnight Rob becomes obsessed with finding the bunker man (so called because he lives in a derelict WWII gun emplacement near the beach) and punishing him for all types of imagined crimes. Bubbling underneath the surface of Rob's personality is a cauldron full of repression, sick fantasies, guilt and bitterness, all of which he projects onto his colleagues, the school, his wife and especially bunker man.

When he eventually meets and seemingly befriends the man, Rob really goes off the deep end, driving a wedge between his wife

and his friends, culminating in a truly sickening shock ending. *Bunker Man* is an extremely violent book, but the majority of the violence is emotional, especially in the way Catto exploits those closest to him as his madness runs out of control.

A truly horrific book and not for the faint-hearted.

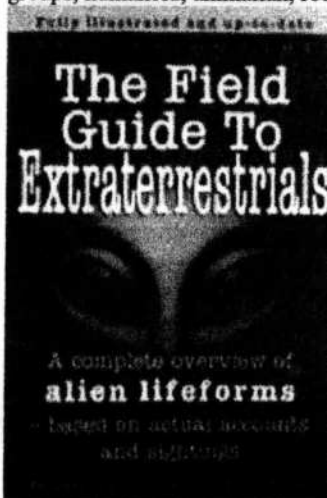
Phil Bond

THE FIELD GUIDE TO EXTRATERRESTRIALS

Patrick Huyghe

New English Library £5.99 pb

As the X-Files further promotes UFOmania, so the proliferation of related books grows. Here we find the surprisingly varied number of sighted aliens neatly categorised into four groups; humanoid, animalian, robotic



and exotic. There's an artist's representation of each individual life form, and these run the whole spectrum from "Doctor Who" style cheapies to some actually quite creepy machines. But if even one of these things actually exists, then it's a pretty awesome prospect. Nicely sized to fit next to the sandwich box when out at the dead of night, it's a neat little book, and an essential accessory for those cold nights up on a hill waiting for the visitation.

Gavin Leigh

HEADBANGER

Hugo Hamilton

Secker & Warburg £9.99 pb

Hamilton's fourth novel has to be seen as ultimately disappointing. It's a story that desperately wants to be visceral and hard-hitting, but never takes off, weakened by characters who seem bleached out and dulled. They move from one plot development to the next, unaffected. Coyne, a policeman in Dublin, tired and dismayed by the MTV generation, shows much in common with the villain of the piece, the local gangster Cunningham. But this seems due to badly drawn characters rather than any real parallel. The punches nearly all miss their mark, lacklustre

attempts to break the ice. As Coyne inevitably veers toward madness, the pace remains the same, and the tension is sorely lacking. Hamilton seems to have lost the thread this time. Let's see another go. "Once more, with *feeling*."

Gavin Leigh

KING INK 2

Nick Cave

Black Sparrow Press

The Black Crow King returns to the world of literature with his second collection of completed lyrics and other short prose writing. In the first King Ink the work covered the first eight years of Cave's output, from the Birthday Party through to his 1987 release, *Tender Prey*. Within that collection, the savage and nihilistic vision of Cave, with all its biblical damnation and visions of self-immolation, were brought into a clear and concise light. In this collection we are brought up to date, with the more redemptive work of his recent past. From the sorrowful beauty of *The Good Son* period, wherein Cave seemed to be searching for some kind of redemption from the raging nihilism of his past, through the wide-screen storytelling of *Henry's Dream*, arriving at the bare confessionals of his current period (The *Let Love In* material was, for me, the peak of his lyrical vision). All are captured here allowing us to put into perspective just what a unique and intensely driven artist Cave really is. A man so committed to a finite aesthetic vision that he seems to have a disregard for all else. Accompanying the translations (some presented in their original scrawling script) are examples of Cave's bible black humoured artwork, and, as in the first volume, a couple of his short prose pieces which as ever make for compulsive reading.

Andy Morrison

LIFE AFTER POLITICS

Edited by Geoff Mulgan

Fontana Press £7.99 pb

Basically, a collection of articles from the political think tank DEMOS, who are influential in Blair's New Labour Party, and like most books on politics, it is not easy to review without sounding partisan. However, I've neither the space nor desire to get on my soap box just yet. It's a fact of modern politics that much of any governments policy making decisions are influenced by think tanks from DEMOS to the Cato Institute of New York, therefore books such as this are invaluable to anyone with more than a passing interest in the process of government. Overall, an enthralling and thought-provoking work that is highly recommended, whatever your political persuasion, that is, as long as your

political awareness doesn't stop at the tabloids.

Phil Bond

SAFE SEX

William Edgar Boggan

4th Estate pb

'Safe Sex' is a beautiful, detailed book about...*fucking*: Fucking with peoples minds, hacking into their worst fears and hang-ups and then shutting the system down.

Wiley Jones, our young, college dropout hero, wants to write the Great American Novel, so to pay the rent, he takes a job working on 'Survivor', a give-away AIDS magazine run by Matt Brackett, a dangerously, almost comically, insane bigot who, through his own radio talk show, broadcasts his revolting views, both homophobic and racist.

Enter Alix Roberts, a deadly red-head. Deadly because, not only is she a gifted computer hacker, but she's also HIV positive. Together as their touching love grows, Alix and Wiley bring about the downfall of Matt Brackett in the coolest way possible...

What starts off as Wiley Jones' adventure with womankind, quickly turns into a passionate love story, and ends as a super-fine computer thriller. A word of warning though, this superbly un-P.C novel, is so sexy, you can almost feel it breathe. If you're going to embrace technology, you'd better be prepared to hack.

Jemma Johnson

SCHOOL'S OUT: POEMS NOT FOR SCHOOL

Benjamin Zephaniah

AK Press £3.95 pb

"The problem is/ There are too many poetry experts/ ... Taking the fun out of poetry". - *Introductory Chat*.

Damn true. Poetry, eh? It don't get far but it has a laff. This is Zeph at his most appealing, his most endearing. He understands, or overstands, the difference between intelligence and intellect, that naivete is not necessarily ignorance, that wit needn't be complex. This is rhythm poetry, true *beat* poetry. Anti class with class.

Jemma Johnson

STAINLESS

Todd Grimson

Quartet £9.00 pb

5th June

It's about time someone bought the vampire myth bang up to date, and the slacker generation needs a new kind of vampire. Grimson does a good job of it, with the setting of LA nightlife strangely fitting and suitable. Justine is the vampire while Keith, a faded rock star is the 90's Jonathan Harker; on equal terms, emotionally involved and he takes care of her while she's asleep. But of course, Justin isn't the



only one, and the intervention of one of her past conquests breaks their slacker lifestyle. Take a bit of tragedy, and vamp up the often tired old story, and what you get is a much cooler edge. *Stainless* succeeds in bringing the vampire into the '90's with flair. This *will* be a movie.

Gavin Leigh

ON KISSING

Adrianne Blue

Indigo £6.99 pb

A welcome look at that most interesting acts that has always been so much more than mere physical contact. Blues writes with a lot of good humour, and a suitably soft edge, exploring the history, significance and complexities of the kiss. It's a wealth of knowledge, but never bogs down. It's Blues feather touch that holds the allure, and a style whose deadpan delivery barely disguises the tease beneath. She's a good writer, knows how to keep up, and witty too. It's confident, informative, and it has to be said, a little rude. Well worthy of a place on any bookshelf.

Gavin Leigh

COMPETITION

Be one of five lucky readers to win *Let's Put The Future Behind Us*, *Family Terrorist* and *Naked Graffiti* in a nice little bundle.

To win these 3 books, tell us why you need the *Naked Graffiti* book. It's a book of erotic short stories by the way.

Answers to the usual address email or land.

Address at the front of the magazine in the Likewise info column.

BAD WISDOM

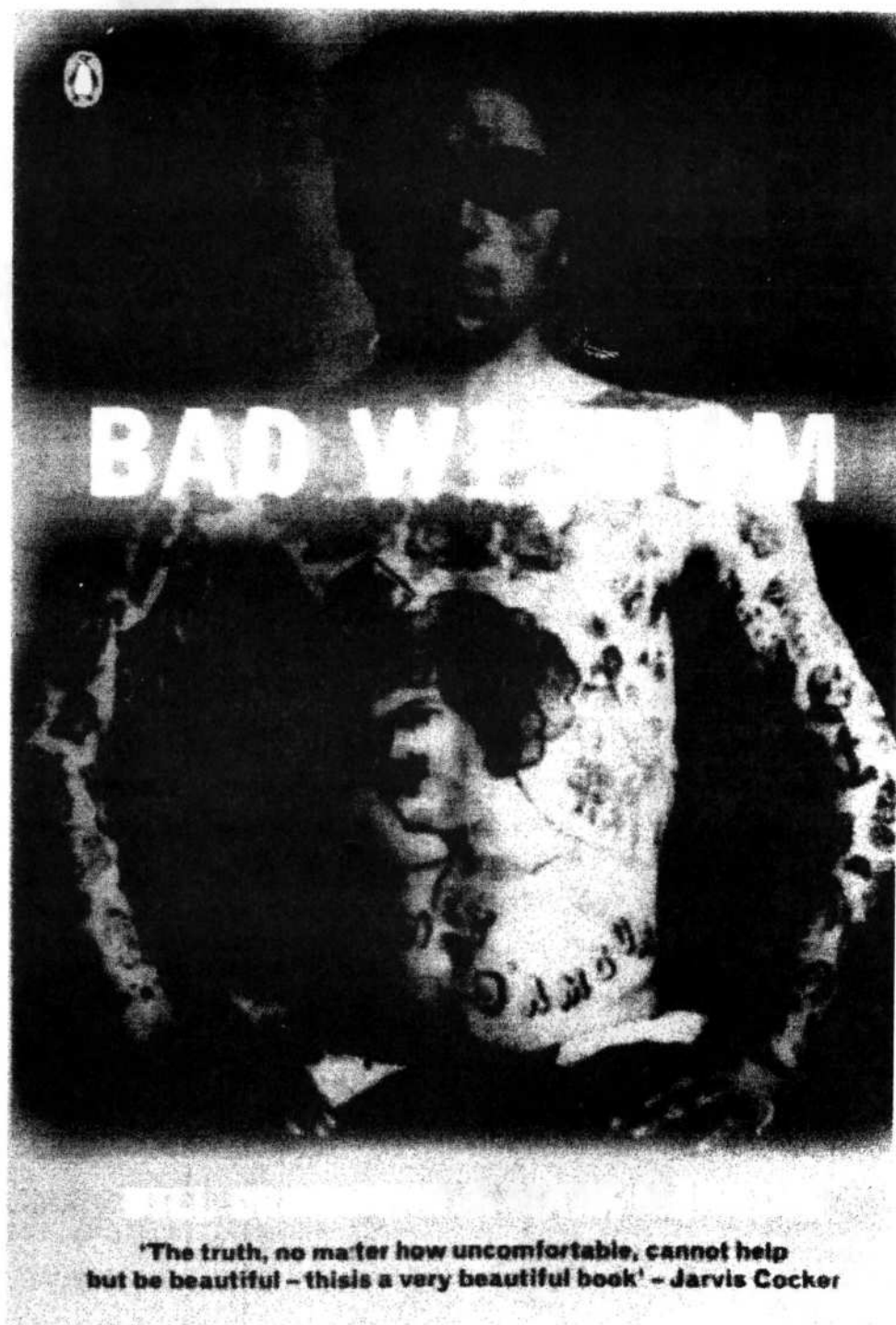
**Bill Drummond &
Mark Manning**

Penguin £6.99 pb

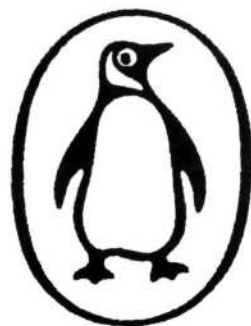
Although many may see Penguin as a possibly conservative publisher these days, it must be remembered that they were responsible for putting out *Lady Chatterley's Lover* in 1960. Here, with *Bad Wisdom*, they show once again that they are most definitely still pushing. Written in turns, paragraph for paragraph, it's a book that is certainly controversial, yet at the same time, a genuine piece of quality literature. A diary of sorts, the book charts Manning's and Drummond's (and friend Gimpo) journey to the North Pole to place an icon of Elvis Presley there, so that its vibes may permeate down throughout the earth. The preparation consists of flying to Helsinki, hiring a Ford Escort, and driving north. The contrast between Drummond's more reality-based narration and Manning's terrifying semi-hallucinogenic variation is startling. Drummond plays it for real, battling with Manning's excess. And Manning is certainly a talent. Sure, he goes off sometimes, but at others he shows flashes of inspiration. There's been a particularly mixed reaction to this intrusion of rock stars into the precious world of

literature, but time will prove this book to be a future classic.

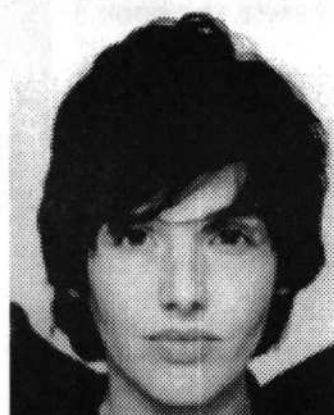
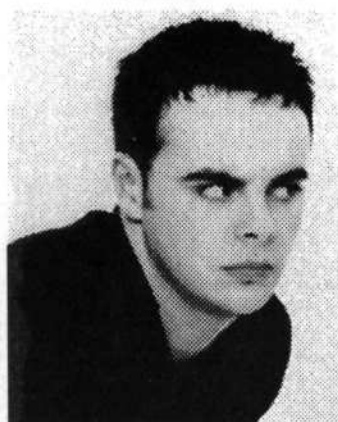
Gavin Leigh



PENGUIN



read about any of these lately?



you would have if you read finetime...

on-line: <http://www.virtualcardiff.co.uk/finetime.htm>

THE BIGGEST PREVIEW GUIDE IN SOUTH WALES FREE
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